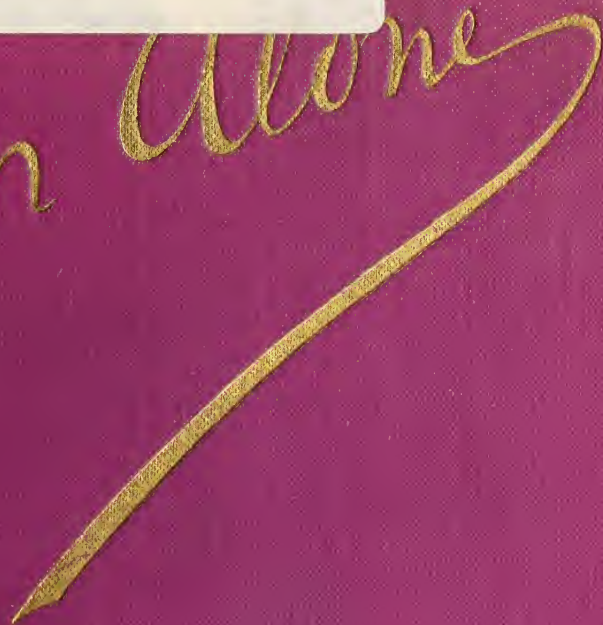


Im Alone



Captain Jack Randell



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I'M ALONE



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Captain Randell shortly after the sinking of the *I'm Alone*

I'M ALONE

By Captain Jack Randell

As Told to Meigs O. Frost



Illustrated

THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY

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I'M ALONE

I'm Alone

CHAPTER I

PIRATES AND RUM

Early days in Newfoundland—My seafaring background—First voyage as a deep-water sailor.

I WAS hiding under the house. My head was spinning around and around like a top. My stomach was heaving as no human stomach ever heaved before. My legs were as weak as water. Stretched flat on the ground and peering unsteadily out into the light from my dark shelter, I could see my mother coming. I knew that the minute she found me, I was in for one of the great spankings of history. I made up my mind she wasn't going to find me. I decided to run away to sea. I was twelve years old.

That day had started so splendidly, too. It was one of those bright, sunny summer days we get in Newfoundland. Half a dozen other boys had come to the house, and we started playing pirates. We went down to the beach and built a driftwood fire and organized a

pirate camp. We were guarding buried pirate treasure until our pirate ship came back.

One of the boys said, "You can't be pirates unless you drink rum."

That sounded reasonable. Pirates had to have food, too. I knew that mother had gone to call on a neighbor. So I led a raiding expedition back to our house, and we looted mother's jam and cookie cupboard. Armed with our wooden swords and dirks, with scouts out on both flanks and in the van, we took our loot back to the beach. That settled the food problem. But the rum was something else again.

Then one of the boys had an idea.

"Let's jig squids," he said.

You didn't need to tell any Newfoundland boy the possibilities of that. Fishermen were all over the place. They used the squid for bait. They paid twenty-five cents a hundred for them. There was our pirate rum.

We dashed away after our squid jiggers. We dashed back to the beach, got a punt, rowed to the squid ground and went to work. Before we finished every one of us had caught about three hundred squids apiece. We rowed to the Bank fishermen in the harbor with them, and sold them for cash. There we were with seventy-five cents each. We pooled our funds. Then one of us

went to a liquor dealer with the story that his father had sent him for it, and bought a bottle of rum.

The pirate crew was all set to go.

Back to the beach we went. We piled more wood on the fire. We ate the jam and cookies. We told blood-curdling tales of the throats we had cut, the ships we had sunk, the victims we had forced to walk the plank. We sang deep-water chanteys that every Newfoundland boy knew in those days. We roared, "Bring aft the rum, Darby!"—and we drank the rum.

The first drink made us choke and splutter, but we downed it. It took courage to tackle the second drink after the way that first drink made us feel. But we were pirates. We emptied the bottle. Of course we all got drunk. And of course it made us terribly sick.

The band of ferocious pirates suddenly became a group of very frightened small boys. We wanted to go home. So for home we started. My house was the nearest.

We staggered along up the road, cold sweat on our faces. Then just as we got to the door, one of the boys called out that he saw my mother coming. The other boys fled. I crawled under the house.

Sick as I was, I knew what was coming to me from mother when she discovered her looted jam and cookie cupboard. And then it dawned on me what was coming

to me from father when he learned about the rum. Mothers and fathers learned everything sooner or later.

That was when I made up my mind to run away to sea.

Over my head I heard my mother's footsteps. Presently they centered in the kitchen. I knew she would be busy there for some time, getting ready for supper. Weak as a kitten I crawled out from under the house and slipped in by another door. I was barefooted, so I didn't make a sound. I had to get some supplies before I ran away to sea. I got them. I slipped out of the house silently and trudged up the road with those supplies under my arm. They were a Bible mother had given me, a loaf of bread, and an old pair of sea-boots that were one of my greatest treasures.

I was going to Catalina, about eighteen miles away. There I could find a chance to ship somewhere without interference.

I made eight or nine miles of it. My head was clearing, and my legs were getting stronger. But I hadn't touched the loaf of bread yet. My stomach wouldn't let me.

Then I met old "Bogey" Tom, a neighbor of ours.

"Where are you going, Jack?" he called.

"Just out walking," I told him.

I saw him grin. That Bible and those sea-boots were

a dead give-away to any old Newfoundlander. If I had been carrying a banner with the words "I'm running away to sea" it couldn't have been any clearer to Bogey Tom.

"Better come along back with me," he suggested.

"No thanks," I said stubbornly, and trudged along.

I got as far as English Harbor when I began to feel sick again. I sat down and thought it out. Then it dawned on me it wasn't the rum and jam and cookies that was making me sick this time. It was homesickness.

I went to a man who knew us and borrowed a horse and buggy. I started home then and there. And I got home ahead of Bogey Tom, though it was after dark. I found the place in an uproar. Nobody had missed me until supper-time when my father asked, "Where's Jack?"—and the fun began. They scoured the neighborhood. They even dragged the ponds. They had given me up for dead by the time I came driving up to the house. My luck was with me. They were so glad to see me that I didn't even get a spanking. My mother, God bless her, threw her arms around me and kissed me. The dear old lady didn't give me a licking for a year after that.

When I come to look back at it, it was the most natural thing in the world for me to start to run away to sea as a boy. We Randells have been sailors as far back as

our records go. They go far back. We came out of Bridport in Dorsetshire, England. A Randell sailed with Sir Francis Drake and fought the Spanish Armada under him. A Randell sailed with Frobisher and Grenville and Lord Nelson. We sailed before that. We've been sailing ever since. Our family records are clear for over five hundred years, and in every generation there has been a Randell who was a sea-captain.

It was my great-great-grandfather, Captain John Randell, a sailing master in the British Navy, who came to the New World in 1715 when the British took Newfoundland from the French. He liked the place. He settled and stayed. But still we followed the sea.

I was born January 1, 1879, at Ship Cove, Trinity Bight, Newfoundland. The name of the place is Port Rexton now. There my earliest memories are of the sea. The sound of it and the talk of it was always in our ears.

It was a hard life, but it was a fine life. It made men and women who could stand on their own feet anywhere. The training started young. I remember being carried to school in the arms of the schoolmistress. She gave me her watch to play with. I threw it on the floor and broke it. I was too young to walk, but I wasn't too young to spank!

To this day I can shut my eyes and see my grand-

father's house. Above all, I can see the big fireplace in the kitchen, where we spent most of our time. The family and the guests sat around it every evening. The talk was endless, and almost always of the sea. We had some books and occasional newspapers. But there were no magazines and no moving-pictures in those days. We didn't seem to need them. Those who live by the sea have plenty to interest and amuse them.

In one corner of that kitchen stood a big puncheon of rum. A new one was rolled in every spring and autumn. A silver cup hung on a silver chain at the tap. The rum was as free as well-water. I never saw any one abuse that freedom.

It was a home and a life to look back to.

My attempt to run away to sea that year I was twelve set my father to thinking. He talked it over with my mother. They were both strong believers in letting youngsters learn by experience. So that same year they let me go on a voyage in a fishing schooner off the Labrador coast for cod.

I walked aboard that little schooner, the proudest deep-water man you ever saw. The minute the fishing started, I was the busiest. Those fishermen put me in charge of the important job of filling their pipes and lighting them. They smoked from the time they turned out until they turned in.

But now and then they gave me a chance to fish for myself. I knew we were fishing on shares. Nobody was going to get any of those fish I caught, but me. I had brought aboard another of my treasures, a little Indian tomahawk. I stuck it in my belt, and with it I chopped the tail off every fish I caught. That was my mark.

I didn't come back rich, but I did come home knowing that I was going to be a deep-water man. I told father and mother all about it.

"You've got some schooling and some growing coming to you yet," father smiled. "Stay home a while, Jack."

To make it more pleasant for me, he bought me a young saddle mare. She was the fleetest thing in our part of the world. I named her Black Bess, after the famous mare that Dick Turpin, the English highwayman, rode. I never put a saddle on her in my life. She'd come from the stable straight to the door of my room and stamp against it with a fore-hoof to waken me in the morning. I still carry a scar on my chin where she kicked and caught me squarely, one day when she was feeling frisky and, after rubbing her down, I slapped her on the rump. It was a knock-out for Black Bess. But I learned to ride her the way an Indian learned to ride.

I had another treasure, too. It was a little double-

barreled Derringer pistol. I'd strap it to my waist and ride Black Bess all over the country, looking for stage-coaches to waylay.

We Newfoundland boys were as full of the lore of highwaymen as we were of pirates. Hundreds of stories and songs about them were current all through Newfoundland. Books about them passed from hand to hand. Nights around the fire the old folks would tell endless tales of them, alongside those tales of the sea.

And then, as though to make sure I would stay home a while longer, my father gave me a shotgun, and I learned to shoot. To top it all off, he told me I could go to sea with him each summer, fishing cod off the Labrador coast. There was an understanding man.

His schooner was built in Boston around 1854. She was named the *Kitty Clyde*, after a famous demi-mondaine of that day. She had all the whims and eccentricities of her namesake. And if there ever were those who could say of the original "Kitty Clyde," "I learned about women from her," I can certainly say of the schooner that bore her name, "I learned about sailing from her."

I learned something else aboard the *Kitty Clyde* the year I was fourteen. It was something that still keeps me from snorting and making sarcastic remarks when I hear a tale of the supernatural.

We were a superstitious lot in Newfoundland in those days. We all believed in ghosts and dreams and second sight and the supernatural generally. Those who sail deep water aren't always so sure there's a humdrum explanation for everything. There was an old Englishman named Jim Pittman who owned a sawmill and a brick-yard on Smith Sound by Random Island, where he lived with his brother. He held the championship in telling ghost stories. He told them in that broad south-of-England dialect of his, and he could curdle your blood.

When we boys knew Jim was coming to visit us, we'd be good for days, to be allowed to sit up late around the fire and listen to him. But though I had heard plenty about the supernatural from Jim Pittman and others, it remained for that voyage on the *Kitty Clyde* with my father when I was fourteen to show me something I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears, for which I have found no explanation short of the supernatural.

We were coming home that autumn from the Labrador coast. We were passing through a little run late that night. A run is a channel inside an island. In pitch darkness we were sailing past a little harbor called Seldom-Come-By. Several of us were standing on deck.

Suddenly a chorus of shrieks and yells from the shore

came to our ears. Then a huge burst of flame on shore shot up through the dark. Dead silence followed.

"Don't anybody speak," ordered my father.

We sailed past the place in complete silence. Presently my father called an order to drop anchor. Then he told us the story.

"You've seen what happens every ten years at Seldom-Come-By," my father said. "There was a boy lived there who went away to sea and became a pirate. He came back forty years old. He was rich and hard and changed from the boy they had known at Seldom-Come-By. He married a lovely girl. He gave her a hard time. He was mean and grasping and arrogant and a bully. Then he fell sick. His wife nursed him.

"One night at ten o'clock he cursed her and sent her down from the bedroom to the kitchen to get something for him. When she came back three minutes later, her husband had vanished. There was only a little four-pane window in the bedroom. It was fastened on the inside. The only other way out of that bedroom was down the stairs she had used, and through the kitchen where she had been all the time, and where four other people were sitting. He hadn't come that way. He was naked in bed, anyway. It had been raining. The ground was soft outside the window. There wasn't a footprint on it. The boats were all away fishing. There wasn't a

craft on the beach. There was no way at all he could have got out and away. But he had vanished.

"Everybody in Seldom-Come-By knew he had sold his soul to the Devil, and that night the Devil had come to collect. And now every ten years at Seldom-Come-By, one night those horrible screams and shrieks and yells sound, and there's a great burst of flame."

Did we believe it! After what we had seen and heard! I believe that story yet.

With fishing trips every summer on the *Kitty Clyde* and school every winter, the time passed until I was sixteen. I had finished grammar school, but I had the mathematics of college. You needed mathematics to be a navigator. I could navigate the *Kitty Clyde* now as instinctively as I breathed.

"I'm going to sea," I told my father that year.

There wasn't any fuss about it, now. Mother and father and my four sisters thought it only natural. I had two brothers at home, one four years older than I, and another, the youngest of the family, an infant. Two brothers had died, children, of diphtheria. But I had one other brother, and of course he was a sailor. He was Captain Isaac Robert Randell, master of the *Belle of the Exe*, an old square-rigger, a barkentine. Since then he has been a Member of Parliament for Newfoundland. Now he is retired from the sea, a partner of

the firm of A. H. Murray & Co., Ltd., at St. John's, Newfoundland.

So my father decided that since I felt I must go to sea, it would be better if I should sail with my brother on the *Belle of the Exe*. She was in the South American trade, carrying dried salt fish in drums, coal and other commodities, between Newfoundland and such ports as Pernambuco, Parahiba, Maceio and Bahia. Those were names I had heard all my life. Now I was going to see what those ports looked like. I was prouder than I had been on my first fishing voyage to Labrador.

CHAPTER II

BEFORE THE MAST

I make a voyage to South America on my brother's ship—To London in steam, and a memorable voyage to South Africa on a square-rigger.

SIXTEEN years old, that summer day I walked aboard the *Belle of the Exe* with my kit over my shoulder. I had signed on as an A. B.—an able-bodied seaman. If I was nothing else in the world, I was that. I stood five feet ten and a half inches in my socks, and I weighed a hundred and seventy pounds. I hadn't yet met anybody my size and weight in Newfoundland who could lick me. We never went much by ages in Newfoundland. Captain John Randell, my father, was to die at the age of eighty-two from injuries he received while he was in the British deep-sea service in the World War in his late seventies. That's how much age counted with us.

Father was skipper of the yacht *Amazon*, used by Bishop Jones, of Newfoundland, when the World War broke out in 1914. The bishop could only reach some of his flock by yacht. Bishop Jones, too, was old. But

when my father talked of retiring each year, he would say to the bishop, "My Lord, I think I'll give up sailing this year." The bishop would say, "John, when you are too old to sail her I'll be too old to sail in her." And the two old men kept going.

With the start of the war, England needed every deep-water pilot she could get. Late in his seventies, my father volunteered and was accepted. Walking home from Clarenville to Shoal Harbor between voyages, he fell on a slippery hillside and fractured five bones. Those were the injuries that killed him. Without them he might have lived to be a hundred.

The old square-rigger hoisted anchor and headed south. Her captain might be my brother ashore, but once afloat and under way he was no brother to me. He was the skipper, and I was just one more A. B. in the forecabin. He was hard, and the crew was hard, and the grub was rotten, and if you didn't like it it was just too bad.

Cracker hash and salt horse and dog's body was the daily diet. It took some galley genius to work out dog's body. It is made of hard sea-biscuit and salt horse, chopped up and sweetened by the weevils in the biscuit and a dash of molasses. If we wanted any supper aboard the *Belle of the Exe*, we saved it from our mid-day dinner or we went without. It was a rough life, but

it was great training. It taught you not to kick at trifles.

I took to it like a duck. I was thoroughly at home long before we reached Pernambuco. And I was on my toes with eagerness and excitement as we sailed into port.

Sailing southward I had an experience that stands to this day as inexplicable by anything less than the supernatural, as was that strange experience on my father's schooner when we passed the little harbor of Seldom-Come-By.

Like most boys of my age, I had been courting, back home. My sweetheart was a lovely little Newfoundland girl named Jessie. She was sick that last visit of mine at St. John's, so ill that she was in bed when I went to her home to say good-by. I was deeply worried about her when we sailed.

There is little difference in time between St. John's and Brazil. We sailed along southward, and were about three hundred miles north of the Equator one day when it was my watch below. I was asleep in my hammock. I dreamed.

Just as plainly as though it was happening in front of my eyes I saw Jessie die in her little bed in that little bedroom in her Newfoundland home. I saw her mother. I saw her doctor. I saw others I recognized there.

I woke up, frightened. I heard four bells strike on the ship's bell as I swung out of my hammock. I went up on deck. The first man I saw was the mate. He knew Jessie as well as he knew me.

"Jessie's dead," I said.

"Don't be foolish, boy," he said. "Are you walking in your sleep?"

"No," I told him. "I'm as wide awake as you are. But I tell you I just saw Jessie die."

He tried to joke me out of it. But I knew what I had seen.

We moored at the Custom's Wharf that connects Recife and Boa Vista. The first thing I did was to go swimming over the side. I climbed back aboard planning the good times I'd have ashore.

The good times started on schedule. But they didn't last long. I came back aboard the ship one day to find one of the crew violently sick in the forecastle. Two of us tried to help him and found out that we couldn't. I ran aft and reported the man's condition to my brother.

"Go get a doctor," said Captain Randell.

I went ashore and brought back a Pernambuco doctor with me. He entered the forecastle and took one look at the sick man.

"Yellow Jack," he said.

We had the dreaded yellow fever aboard. Next day

another man went down with it. The day after that, the third man went down with it. And on that day the first man to go down with it died in hospital.

Two days after that the port authorities took us over and sealed the ship. I was the only man aboard who hadn't caught yellow fever. The rest were all taken to the hospital. The Customs put a watchman aboard, as did the British consul. They were both negroes. The watchmen and I were the only persons on board the *Belle of the Exe* for the next thirty-six days.

I seemed to be immune to yellow fever. The ship might be sealed, but I managed to get ashore. I spent my time at the ship-chandler's, wandering about the port, sitting in the park learning Portuguese by talking it with beach-combers and visiting my sick shipmates in the hospital. You never saw such a hospital. Yellow fever patients lay next bed to patients down with a dozen different tropical diseases, mostly abhorrent ones, or patients slashed or shot in water-front brawls. Women and men were in the same wards, side by side. It was a sweet place.

When the port authorities saw I was not developing Yellow Jack they gave me freedom to leave the ship as often as I wanted. I made my headquarters with Cluny, the ship-chandler.

One day the bark *Aureola*, from St. John's, com-

manded by Captain Jackman, arrived at Pernambuco and anchored in the bay. From the rail of the *Belle of the Exe* I saw her skipper being rowed ashore in his gig. We were old friends back home.

"Hello, Jack," he called. "Where's your captain?"

"Ashore," I called back to him. There wasn't time to tell him why my brother was ashore.

I went ashore myself to explain. But in the meantime the *Aureola's* men had heard about the yellow fever aboard the *Belle of the Exe*. When the group of them saw me approaching, they yelled an alarm, scattered and ran like mad. They thought if I even spoke to them, they'd get it! Presently they learned better.

Then Captain Jackman gave me a bundle of newspapers from home.

The first thing I saw in them was that Jessie had died. And she had died within five minutes of the time that I, asleep at sea hundreds of miles away, had seen her die!

Sometimes I spent an evening ashore. Occasionally that made it a problem to get back aboard the *Belle of the Exe*, as she was lying at anchor at Franquay and swung with the tide. I worked out a system. Our jolly-boat was never hoisted but swung astern by her painter. I'd strip in the dark, ashore, swim out to the jolly-boat, climb aboard, row back and get my clothes.

One night I waited ashore too long. As I swam out

the ebb-tide caught me and carried me past the jolly-boat. I made shore farther down, landing and crawling out of the water as naked as the hour I was born.

I was in a devil of a fix. To get back to where my clothes were from the point where I came ashore, I would have had to walk down a brightly lighted street with a lot of people on it. But luckily before the situation grew really embarrassing, a native fisherman with a catamaran came along and paddled me back to my clothes.

When the thirty-six days ended and we got our ship back again, two of our men had died and the rest of the officers and crew tottered aboard, living skeletons, yellow as Chinese and so weak a child could have knocked the lot of them over.

I was made cook. The cook had been the second man to die.

"Into the galley with you, Jack," the captain ordered me.

You don't question your captain's orders.

"What do you wish for breakfast, sir?" I asked him.

"Coffee and rice and curry," he said.

Into the galley I went. I took a three-gallon pot and put it on the stove, in which I had built a roaring fire. I poured two gallons of water in the pot and added ten pounds of rice. I sat down to watch it. That infernal

rice began to swell. Talk about feeding a multitude on a few loaves and fishes! I began to think I could feed all Pernambuco on that ten pounds of rice! As it swelled and swelled, I dipped and dipped, for you couldn't waste all that good food.

Presently I had every utensil in that galley filled with rice. I gave them rice and curry and rice pudding and rice soup and rice patties until the captain called me aft.

"See here, Jack!" he exploded. "What do you think we are? A lot of damned Chinamen?"

He raked me over the coals in proper shape, and I took it without saying a word rather than admit I knew so little about cooking.

The ballasting of the *Belle of the Exe* for her voyage home was under way when the bark *Lavinia*, of St. John's, Newfoundland, which had come into Pernambuco while we were laid up with Yellow Jack, prepared to sail for home. Her master, Captain Thom, was an old friend of our family. His wife was aboard, too.

The *Lavinia* was a beauty. She looked like a yacht. Her decks were holystoned as white as wood can be scoured. Her copper and her brass glittered. You could shave yourself in her bright-work. Alongside her, the *Belle of the Exe* looked like an old garbage scow manned with a crew of skeletons.

As the *Lavinia* picked up her anchor, her stern came

around under our jib-boom. Captain Thom saw me standing by the rail.

"Jack, tell your captain I'd like to race him home," he called out to me. "I'm sorry I'm starting a couple of days ahead of you so we can't make a race of it."

A lad will boast about his own ship, no matter how bad she looks.

"A couple of days don't matter to us at all, Captain Thom," I called back. "Let's make a race of it. We'll beat you into St. John's!"

He burst out laughing.

"How much will you bet?" he roared.

"I'll bet you a bottle of grog!" I said. That was betting like a sailor, I felt.

"Taken," he laughed.

The *Lavinia* slid out to sea. We went on with our ballasting.

It was comic, or it was tragic, to watch us follow her two days later when the old *Belle of the Exe* put to sea. The boatswain was so weak he had to sit in a chair as he steered. One man was so ill that he died six hours after we reached St. John's. He was lurching like a drunken man then, on a level deck. I don't know yet just how we managed to hoist sail, but somehow we got the canvas up.

The tug towed us out of Pernambuco. Somehow we

weathered Point Olinda. We were too weak to try to tack. The Lord certainly made that weather to order for a crew of sick seamen. We never started sheet or tack until we were within fifty miles of Cape Race. It was magnificent weather all the way. If we had struck a storm it would have torn the sticks out of us before that crew of invalids could have shortened sail. As far as we knew, the *Lavinia* had been safe in port in St. John's for several days.

Then, off Cape Race, a flurry of rain and sleet that changed to snow, hit us squarely. There were four of us able to go aloft. We got her shortened down, and we hove to until daylight. I was on deck when the dawn broke. I was cook no longer. One sailor was so weak my brother kept him puttering around the galley and took me out of it.

I couldn't believe my eyes as I looked out across the water in the growing light. There was the *Lavinia*, only six or eight miles west of us!

She was hove to under topsails. Captain Thom must have seen us as soon as we saw him. He squared away, loosened his royals, and put everything he had on her. It was blowing half a gale now. The *Lavinia's* canvas began to flap.

I had given up all thought of winning that bottle of grog. It was just a sacrifice to a lad's loyalty for his

ship. But now I saw a chance. And now it was time for us to do something.

I looked around. There was the cook on deck.

"Take the wheel!" I called to him. He tottered over to it. I loosened the upper topsails. The outside gasket on the lee yard-arm had a turn around the sheet clew. I had to go up aloft to let her go.

I raced up the rigging and swarmed out on the lower topsail yard-arm. I held on to the foot-rope of the upper topsail-yard. I had just flipped the gasket around the sheet clew, when the yard-arm flipped up and left me dangling high in air by my left hand.

I reached up with my right hand, got a grip and went in hand over hand along the foot-rope until I reached the rigging. By it I descended to the deck. And there my brother was waiting. He was boiling mad. He had come on deck just in time to see the whole show.

"Damn you for an idiot!" he roared. "You'll never be killed! You'll drown. Of all the damned fool tricks I ever saw, that was the foolhardiest!"

In the excitement of the moment I forgot that I was an A. B. out of the forecastle talking to the ship's captain. Here was my brother. The honor of our ship was at stake. Not to mention a bottle of grog.

"Never mind all that," I said. "Let's get some canvas on her. We've just got to beat the *Lavina* into

St. John's. I've got a bottle of grog bet on the race!"

That was the first my brother knew that his ship was in a race. But he was a sportsman.

With the men we had on deck we got the topgallant-sail and the royal on her. By then it was seven bells and we could call the other watch from below. With their aid we got the heavy canvas on her.

Inside an hour we passed Cape Race. I learned later that Captain Thom was pacing his deck swearing like a pirate while his wife at first tried to silence him with "Hush! Hush!"—and then fled below in disgust at his fresh outbursts. Then up came a third vessel. She was a barkentine. Now, all three of us were racing into St. John's.

And all three of us were making from eleven to twelve knots, with every stitch of canvas we had. My brother had gone below to shave, preparing to go ashore. I would have gone ashore with a beard a yard long, if I could have grown one, rather than miss a second of that race.

Suddenly I saw the *Lavinia* sheer offshore. Now what could be the reason for that? I ran aloft, going up the rigging like a monkey up a coconut tree, to discover the cause. Then I saw it. It was a field of floating ice. I slid down to the deck again and told the men about it.

"I'll go aloft and see if I can find a lead through the ice," I said, all excitement. "You steer the way I signal."

The whole crew were in the race now. It was a family affair. Up I went to the topsail-yard. Sure enough, I saw an open channel through the floating ice. I signaled the helmsman to go into that lead. Into it we drove. I signaled to luff her up. We luffed and slid into another lead.

Here was something we could get away with that the *Lavinia* didn't dare tackle. The *Belle of the Exe* had greenheart sheathing on her hull along the water-line above the copper. The *Lavinia* was sheathed in copper up to her load-line and couldn't take such chances. The ice would have ripped it. She was also a composite vessel.

We luffed her up again and shot into another lead that I signaled. But just before we made it we bumped along the edge of that floating ice. There was a roar on deck. I looked below. My brother had come dashing up the companionway. One side of his face was white with shaving-soap lather. The other side was streaming blood where his razor had gashed his cheek when we bumped against the floating ice. The language he bellowed aloft at me equaled Captain Thom's best.

But this time we slid through the lead cleanly, and we were out of the ice. We got to the lone tug that was waiting for the winner off Cape Spear.

We were the first of the three into St. John's. The *Lavinia* didn't get in until next morning.

When we got ashore, I learned that the *Belle of the Exe* with her invalid crew had made the fastest sailing time ever made between Pernambuco and St. John's. We had done it in nineteen days and five hours. It's the record yet.

I got my bottle of grog. I learned that when the signalmen at Cape Race telegraphed that the three vessels were racing in, thousands of dollars were bet. That sort of thing beat horse-racing in St. John's. They didn't know much about race-horses, but they did know seamanship.

And the old-timers in St. John's will tell you that the sailing record the *Belle of the Exe* made wasn't a patch on the cussing record Captain Thom of the *Lavinia* made when he landed. Two days' start at Pernambuco and beaten into St. John's by a crew of wrecks! He never lived it down.

My brother and my father were pretty proud. Next voyage when I came aboard the *Belle of the Exe*, outward bound, I found I had been made a boatswain.

Nearly three years I sailed in her between St. John's

and South American ports, with one voyage to Glasgow. Then I tired of that trade and decided to make a voyage or two in steam. So I signed on with the crew of the steamship *Regulus*, running between Newfoundland and England, mainly, with iron ore and lumber. She made occasional trips to the United States and Continental Europe, too. I was beginning to see something of the world. Nobody could tell me I couldn't take care of myself anywhere. That was before I got lost in London.

The old *Regulus* put in at London in October, 1899. I was a lad of twenty. Englishmen were just beginning to talk about the possibility of a war with the Boers in South Africa. It meant nothing to me.

What I was most interested in as we moored at the Surrey Commercial Dock was seeing the Elephant and Castle, of which I had heard a lot. It was the most famous district in London, and the "pubs" were the biggest, my shipmates told me. The second mate of the *Regulus*, Mr. Noseworthy, was an old family friend. He told me he'd go there with me. So that night we went ashore.

We took in the Elephant and Castle, or it took us in—take your choice. It was a hectic night. The pubs were crowded, and all that section of London was crowded. Sometime during the evening, somewhere in

the crowd, I lost Mr. Noseworthy. After a long search for him I gave it up, saw the sights by myself for a while, and then decided to go back to my ship. It dawned on me I didn't know the way.

I opened negotiations with the driver of a hansom cab. He wanted eight shillings. But all I had was eight pence. We couldn't make a deal.

"When you're in trouble in London, lean on the nearest bobby," one of my shipmates had told me.

I looked for a bobby—a London policeman. I found one and told him the fix I was in. He grinned and explained to me that I could take the tram to a certain point in Old Kent Road and walk the rest of the way to the dock gate or entrance and then up the dockside to my ship. I reached the dockside. There I found huge piles of lumber some thirty feet high blocking my path, and projecting out over the water about four feet.

I climbed up to the top of the first lumber-pile, walked across it and found the next lumber-pile was ten or fifteen feet away. That was too much climbing after an evening at the Elephant and Castle. So I gathered myself together, and leaped the gap to the next lumber-pile. I kept this up for miles, it seemed to me. Those lumber-piles looked endless.

Then the end of the piece of lumber I was standing on, ready to spring to the next pile, cracked sharply and

broke off beneath my feet. I tumbled thirty feet to the ground. It's a wonder I didn't break my neck. But I got off with a few small bruises.

As I arose, I saw I was standing in an open path between the lumber-piles that led straight along the wharf. I had been climbing mountains and leaping from crag to crag, when I had a broad highway! I reached my ship at daybreak. If any of those shipmates are still living, they're still telling that story—with amplifications.

From London we steamed to Ardrossan, Scotland, and home to Newfoundland again. I was tired of steam already. I wanted sail once more. But nothing offered in sail except an old American square-rigger. She was a bark, the *Arcot*. I joined up with her as second mate.

Officially, you had to have four years in square-riggers to get your second mate's ticket in those days. But there was many a lad holding his second mate's berth without a ticket. I was just one more. They weren't so fussy, then, if you knew your job.

I sailed in the *Arcot* from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. It was November, 1899. The Boer War was in full swing. The First Contingent, the Royal Canadian Regiment, had gone to South Africa already. Now there was talk about a second Canadian contingent.

The second night in Sydney I was in the captain's quarters on the *Arcot*, playing cards with him, his wife and his sister-in-law.

"Why don't you go to South Africa?" the sister-in-law asked us both.

"Oh, to hell with it!" said the captain.

I didn't say anything. But I went to bed thinking hard.

CHAPTER III

BOOTS AND SPURS

I forsake the sea for a horse, becoming a member of the Royal Canadian Artillery in the Boer War—A mutiny at Cape Town—I become a mounted scout.

NEXT morning I went to the captain.

"I want to go ashore to Sydney, sir, to join up for South Africa," I told him.

"You go to hell," he said. "There are plenty of fools getting killed without you going. I'll put you in the hospital a month if I catch you trying to leave ship."

He could come near doing it, too. He was a giant, six feet eight inches tall, and he weighed three hundred and eighty pounds. He wasn't fat, either.

Presently, after giving some orders, he went down to breakfast. I waited until he was in the middle of the meal. Then I slipped ashore and ran for the ferry that connects North Sydney to Sydney. I went straight to the armory. I found Major Crowe in charge of recruiting for the artillery.

"I want to join up, sir," I said.

"Have you ever been a soldier?" he asked.

"No, sir. I'm a sailor," I told him. "But I can ride and shoot."

I certainly was blessing those days with Black Bess and my shotgun and pistol back home.

Major Crowe led me before an army doctor.

"Have him strip and examine him," he ordered.

Several times in my life I've felt proud. That was one of those times.

"He's absolutely perfect, physically, Major," said the doctor. "I never saw such a man."

Ten minutes later I was sworn in as a Canadian artilleryman. I had to lie about my age. I was barely past twenty. I swore I was twenty-one.

They fitted me out with the little yellow and blue pill-box hat, the blue coat and the blue pants with the red stripes down the legs. And in that outfit I strutted out to attend to a couple of matters and then go back to the ship and make peace with my old skipper.

He glared at me as I came over the side in that uniform.

"I've joined up, sir," I told him. "I'd like to draw my pay."

"Not a damned cent," he roared, red with anger.

Then I got mad, too. I remembered it was an American ship. I marched up the dock and went straight to

the American vice-consul. He listened to my story and told me to tell the captain he would do better if he paid me off without consular trouble.

"It's a bit difficult to make a crime out of enlisting when your country is at war," he smiled.

I went back with the message. The captain paid me off, grimly silent.

"What are you so angry about?" I asked him.

I got the surprise of my life. That giant broke down and cried like a baby.

"I've known your father and mother for years," he sobbed. "What the hell do you suppose I'm going to tell them if you get killed?"

I had the answer to that in my pocket. I pulled it out. It was a telegram from my mother. I had wired her the first thing after I enlisted. She had wired back:

"God bless you, boy, and good luck. If I was a man I'd go too."

So the captain and I shook hands and I went off to celebrate with my thirty dollars' pay. It was a lot of money, then.

Then the drill sergeant got me. For days I did squads left and right with some more recruits from Cape Breton and Halifax and New Brunswick. We were concentrated at Monckton. We were sent to Quebec. And

there, one hundred and eighty men strong, we were organized into Battery E, Royal Canadian Field Artillery.

Ten days' training in Quebec quartered at the old Citadel and drilled on the Plains of Abraham and we were sent to Halifax. There we went aboard the steamship *Laurentian* of the old Allan Line. She was a transport, then. Old sailors knew her as the "*Rollin' Polly*." She certainly had earned that name.

After two hectic days and nights we embarked, men, horses and guns and sailed for Cape Town, South Africa. We were off to the war.

The *Rollin' Polly* got in her work from the start. We had headed out straight into a gale. How she rolled! Before the first day was over, I was one of three men aboard who weren't seasick. And we three caught hell if ever three human beings did. We worked without let-up for forty-eight hours, with never a break, to save the artillery horses. They were down, in their stalls, by scores. We had to get them back on their feet and readjust their belly-bands to keep them from breaking their legs when the ship rolled—and keep ourselves from getting kicked to death while we did it.

Here it was on the old *Laurentian* I first met "Gatling Gun" Howard. He was an American and a director in the Colt Arms Company, of Hartford, Connecticut. He

had been made a quartermaster lieutenant with the Canadians. He had gone in to introduce the Colt machine-gun in the British Army. At that time the British used the Maxim machine-gun.

The *Rollin' Polly* rolled her way across the ocean and made Cape Town at last. We debarked and were marched into camp at Green Point, a Cape Town suburb. Three weeks we stayed in that place. It was a hell-hole. The sand and the food were the worst of it. Hard bread and boiled beef is bad enough for a steady diet, but when you fill it with sand, it gets worse. And that African sand got into everything.

Presently they shipped us by train to De Aar Junction. From there we were shoved out west in Cape Colony, south of Kimberley.

There, at Smitt's Drift, we had our first scrap with the Boers. We were in camp. The guns were parked. They were twelve-pounders, using mostly shrapnel. We also had a few Maxim machine-guns for close work. That time we needed them.

Under cover of the dark the Boers crept up. Silently they leaped on our outposts and killed them. Then, just at dawn, they opened fire on the camp.

It was a sweet scrap while it lasted. Wakened by the Boer firing, we crawled to our machine-guns and drove them off after about an hour's fighting. We lost

eighteen or twenty men. I came out of it with a bullet-hole in my hat.

That was our real introduction to the Boers. If they had waited for reveille, when all of our men would have been up and moving about, before they opened fire, they would have wiped out every one of us.

After that we went on a long trek out into the Kalahari Desert. The best we got out of it was some occasional long-range shooting at little groups of Boers.

We came back to Kimberley as ragged as a lot of tramps. Oat-sacks were wrapped about our feet to take the place of worn-out boots. We were starving on a ration of one biscuit a day for the last ten days of it. The lot of us were rotten with dysentery from drinking water the color of coffee. Many a time I stole a handful of grain from the horses and chewed it to stay my stomach.

The whole battery was sore. There was good fighting in the Free State and the Transvaal, but we were out of it.

Then we got into a small fight at a place called Trigela, some fifty or sixty miles north of Kimberley. That had been some sort of a Boer camp. The sand was literally alive with lice. In no time at all, the lot of us were squirming with them. And those were the biggest lice I ever saw.

The major had lost his two horses for his Cape cart. I walked up to him one morning with a gift to serve as a substitute for them.

"These ought to haul your cart better than any team of horses I ever saw, Major," I told him.

And I handed him a match-box in which I had imprisoned two of the biggest lice of my personal collection.

The major opened the box, looked inside curiously, and then roared with laughter. He talked about that gift for weeks. The Canadians, officers and men, were always stronger for fighting than they were for Regular Army discipline.

We received orders to go up-country and entrained for the long journey. Horses and men were loaded in cattle trucks, but we didn't mind as long as we were going to see some fighting.

Three days later we were dumped off at a place called Victoria West, made a trek of over five hundred miles out from the railway to the northwest, through the "Karoo" Desert, saw a little fighting, and returned to a place called De Aar.

We stayed there three weeks. Lots of our men got enteric fever. Then we were ordered to march, and march we did.

Under Major-General Sir Charles Warren we trekked

northwest again to Douglas. We had several scraps on the way, but it was eighteen miles west of Douglas that we got our first real baptism of fire.

At a place called "Fabers Putts" in the early dawn the Boers surrounded us on three sides and gave us hell. The horses of the Imperial Yeomanry and Pagets Horse stampeded, and everything was confusion. Our artillery horses stood their ground, and after the drivers had taken them to safety behind the farmhouse, we opened fire with our twelve-pounders and machine-gun and soon had the Boers on the run. We lost twenty killed and about one hundred wounded out of a column of five hundred men.

From there we marched to the north into Griqualand West. That country was next door to Hades. Hot days and bitter cold nights. Drought and hunger. When we reached Kimberley, we were a bunch of scarecrows. Soles off our boots. Uniforms in rags. Men and horses like skeletons. It was a common thing to see men with gunny-sacks around their feet, their knees, and pieces of sacking tied around their waist to cover their extremities. Horses and men ate the same corn from the same nose-bags.

After a week or two at Kimberley, the battery was split up and my section was sent north to the banks of the Vaal River.

There we did guard duty on the temporary bridge. It was an old Boer camp, and the lice were as thick as the proverbial sands of the sea. The order of the day was: down to the river, and strip off everything, boil all the clothing, and walk around in greatcoats until our clothes dried, then don clothes and drill. All the disinfectants in the world couldn't have killed the lice in that camp.

The men became restless. "Give us a fight or send us home" was heard all over the camp. The officers felt the same, but could not voice their grievances.

Other sections of the battery, along with another battery stationed in the Orange Free State, were in a state of open rebellion. They decided to send us home.

I was sent down to Cape Town with the quartermaster-sergeant to pack our stores. The batteries were sent down half-way and detrained to wait orders, as there were no transports available for three weeks. In that place open rebellion broke out, and there was hell to pay.

The batteries reached Cape Town in the afternoon and were to embark for home the following morning. They were placed in a camp about four miles out of Cape Town and Imperial troops were on guard. No leave was granted any man below commissioned rank. About five hundred Australian Rifles were in the same

camp, and the word soon went round that the Canadians were going to town. Over a thousand men walked out and marched into Cape Town. As sore as hell, they intended to have a good time before they sailed.

Officers tried to stop them. Sentries tried to stop them. On they marched in orderly column, singing and laughing like a lot of schoolkids. Liquor that night, and homeward bound the next day.

"What the hell do we care, Bill?" was the song called out above the racket.

The officers knew they were headed for liquor. Some of them rode ahead at a gallop into Cape Town to stop the supply.

"Serve no drinks to any one," was the order that was rushed to every bar.

I was in a bar on Adderly Street when that order came. It had come too late to lock the doors against the crowd. We packed the place solidly from bar to street. The proprietor climbed up on the bar and made a speech to us while we clamored for drinks.

"I can't serve a drink to you, boys," he told us.

"We'll take it anyhow!" the chorus came back.

We took it. That bar was shot up in Wild West fashion. Pistol bullets shattered the chandeliers. Men tried to shoot their monograms into the big plate glass mirror. It was rough on the mirror. Others vaulted the

bar and began to work as volunteer bartenders. There wasn't a drop left when we finished.

Then we headed down to the Grand Hotel where there was a famous bar. The news went ahead of us. The manager there was a diplomat. He was standing on his own bar as we surged in.

"Listen, boys," he shouted, "they won't let me sell you a drink. But they can't stop me giving you my own liquor. The drinks are free as long as they last. The only thing I ask you is, don't wreck the bar!"

He got three ringing cheers for that. All over Cape Town the news spread that it was free drinks at the Grand. The crowd was packed solid for two city blocks about the hotel. Traffic was stopped. The Military Police saw they couldn't do a thing with that mob, so they didn't even try.

Then somebody spread the word that Gatling Gun Howard was somewhere in the Grand Hotel. Somebody else told us that Lord Roberts had made this American fighting man first a captain and then a major, and had given him permission to raise an outfit of Canadian Scouts to be known as Howard's Canadian Scouts. We sent a delegation up into the hotel to bring him down. They brought him into the bar on their shoulders, and stood him high on the mahogany.

There was a man to fight under! Straight and wiry

and leather-faced, with a white mustache and white goatee, he stood there on the bar and told us about the scouts he was organizing.

"Take me!" shouted every man in the room.

"Finish your liquor and see me later. I'll pick the best of the lot of you," he promised. Then he left us while we cheered ourselves hoarse for him.

And then, because the manager of the Grand Hotel had been so decent about it, we passed the hat for him and brought him back three big Canadian felt hats full of golden sovereigns.

By ten o'clock that night we had drunk the Grand Hotel bar dry. We hadn't broken six glasses in all that riot. The bar and the room weren't damaged a shilling's worth.

Orderly, we started back for camp. Those that could walk, walked back orderly. Those that couldn't walk, crawled back. But they crawled back orderly.

I went to look up Gatling Gun Howard. I found him in a little room up in the attic of the Grand Hotel.

"Major Howard, sir," I said, standing at attention after saluting, "I've come to see if you'll let me join up with your scouts."

"Sit down, boy," he said. "And don't call me major. Call me 'Gat.'"

That was the kind of man *he* was!

I sat down.

"Haven't I seen you before, somewhere?" he asked, looking at me closely.

"Yes, sir," I said. "We came out to Africa on the same transport—the old *Rollin' Polly*."

"By God," he said suddenly. "I remember you, now. You're the lad who saved my horse!"

It was his personal horse, and he loved it. That was all the introduction I needed. I certainly was drawing dividends for those forty-eight sleepless hours I'd put in, saving the horses on the *Laurentian* from breaking their legs.

I walked out of that little hotel room late that night, with "Gat" Howard's promise that I would be one of his scouts. It seemed that he got what he wanted in that man's army.

He picked fifty-six men from all the Canadians in South Africa. Every man in the lot had to be able to ride without a saddle, shoot at a gallop, and hit what he shot at. There wasn't a Canadian in all South Africa outside those fifty-six who didn't envy us.

After we were selected, we swaggered out into Cape Town and spent our money on whip-cord riding breeches, tailored khaki tunics, high laced leather boots and silver spurs. Each one of us was equipped with two heavy, long, Colt, single-action .45 six-shooters and

a carbine. Each one of us was given three horses, the best that could be found: one to ride, and two to lead and shift to when we needed a fresh mount. Each one of us had been transferred from his old command, at Major Howard's request.

Two days after Christmas, 1900, we entrained at Cape Town, headed for Pretoria. And I was a sergeant in that band of picked fighting men. Just twenty-one years old. Was I proud——!

Fifty-six of us. Three months later, four of us were left alive.

We were the eyes of the British Army in South Africa. They had no aviators, then.

Scrapping started from the jump. General Sir John French had launched eleven parallel columns, and was sweeping through the eastern Transvaal with them. He had learned by bitter experience that infantry was useless in that campaign. Armed men on foot can't run down armed men on horseback with all South Africa to play in. The mounted infantry was the answer.

To those of us who knew horses, the M. I. was the world's best show for a while, and we had ringside seats. Those infantry foot-sloggers had never given a horse a thought before that campaign. I've seen scores of them try to mount their horses from the off side. I've seen them flying through the air by platoons. But those

beggars could fight, and they learned to ride by riding.

Our job as scouts was to ride fifteen to twenty miles ahead of the columns, keep in contact with the Boers wherever it was possible, and keep the column informed daily. We never missed a day without three or four scraps with bands of retreating Boers.

Oom Paul's men were retreating sullenly before the advance of those eleven columns. They were overpowered, and they knew it. They weren't strong enough to smash the columns themselves. But whenever they came into contact with smaller bodies of us, they turned and tried to sting us like infuriated wasps.

They laid traps for small parties. They were as expert as Indians at ambush. Some of the most savage fighting in the world marked our advance over the veldt.

CHAPTER IV

OUTWITTING THE BOERS

I have various adventures in South Africa as a mounted scout—The perils of a dispatch rider.

TWENTY-FIVE of us saddled one morning and rode out into the Transvaal. We were about half-way between Pretoria and Piet Retief. Captain Charlie Ross was in command of our detachment.

We rode along several hours without sighting another human being. The sun was getting high and blazing down. It was hot.

Suddenly, some distance ahead, we saw four Boers ride up on the crest of a gentle rise.

"Yoicks and away!" called one of the scouts, burlesquing the fox-hunt cry.

Captain Ross raised his hand and signaled us to come on as, out in front of us, he set spurs to his horse.

We gave our horses the spurs and charged after him, whooping and yelling like a crowd of schoolboys.

Out there ahead of us the four Boers sat their horses

easily on the crest of the rise. They took a couple of shots at us. We came charging on. We were close to them before they wheeled their horses and rode out of sight down the other side of the rise. We dashed over the crest in hot pursuit.

It started like a fox-hunt, but it ended in a dog fight. For there, waiting for us on the other side of the rise, was a band of about a hundred and twenty-five armed and mounted Boers. Their rifles rose and pointed at us. By the time we could have checked our charge and wheeled, they would have shot us to pieces. Make no mistake about it, those Boers could shoot as well as they could ride, and most of them had started riding before they could walk.

Captain Ross, still riding in the lead, took in the situation at a glance.

"Smash through them and ride back again!" he shouted.

It was the only thing to do. We spurred our horses once more. Our reins dropped to their withers. Gripping them with our knees, our carbines and our Colts blazing, we smashed straight into the middle of the mass of them.

The crash of our impact carried us clean through. It was man-to-man stuff. I had a Colt in each hand, and I remember getting three Boers at such close range that

the powder burned their shirts. You couldn't miss. Twenty-five of us, but there were fifty or more of them on the ground when we came out on the other side.

We swung around as quick as we could. We had our losses, too. What was left of us bunched up as Captain Ross shouted his commands. Then he yelled "Charge!" again. We smashed back through the disorganized mass of them, shooting as fast as we could squeeze trigger. A lot more of them dropped.

But they were shooting, too. When we came out into the clear, there were just five of our twenty-five left. And there were still some thirty or forty of them.

About a mile and a half away, as we had ridden up, we had noticed a Boer farmhouse with a stone-walled horse kraal beside it.

"Make for that kraal!" shouted Captain Ross. "We can hold them off behind those walls!"

We dashed for the kraal. The Boers came after us, hell-for-leather. We'd ride a few hundred yards, halt and wheel, fire at them and slow them up, and then wheel and gallop toward the kraal, reloading as we rode.

At one of those halts I was sighting my carbine at a Boer when the earth rose up and hit me in the face. My horse had been shot out from under me. Luckily I had kept my grip on my carbine.

Captain Charlie Ross emptied his carbine at the racing Boers, and then saw me jump to my feet.

"Grab my stirrup!" he shouted.

I grabbed. He put spurs to his horse. Talk about seven-league boots! It seemed to me that I only hit the veldt once in a hundred yards!

We sailed over the stone wall of that horse kraal like birds, and just in time. From behind it we pumped carbine fire into the Boers and halted their advance. They dismounted and started the attack on foot, or rather on their bellies, for they came crawling up Indian fashion and shooting as they came. We began dropping them one by one. They never got to the wall.

But there they had us ringed in. We were beginning to wonder how long the five of us could hold them off.

Then a cloud of dust showed across the veldt. We began to yell and cheer like maniacs. The column was coming!

The Boers saw it, too. They crawled back to their horses, leaped into the saddle and rode off. We sent a volley after them to speed them on their way, and stayed right where we were until the column came up.

Then we drank about a canteen of water apiece, I got a horse, and we rode out to see if any of our men who had fallen in that fight were still living.

I found my chum, Sergeant Munsey, stretched out on

the veldt, shot through the body. At first I thought he was dead. The Boer bullet had entered over his heart and come out over his left kidney. It caught him as he was riding toward them, bent forward in his saddle and shooting. But then I found he was breathing. I got some rum and water down his throat and he came back.

He came back mad. Not because of the wound, though that was bad enough. But because he saw with his first conscious glance that the Boers had stripped him to his shirt.

His tailored tunic, his whip-cord breeches, his high laced leather boots and his silver spurs were with some Boer, now. His carbine and his two Colts, too. The language he used!

But Sergeant Munsey recovered and got back to Canada. And long after the war a rich Boer visited Canada in the course of a trip around the world and advertised in the Canadian newspapers to try to get in touch with the sergeant of Howard's Canadian Scouts whose boots and silver spurs he had worn all through the rest of the war. Munsey read the advertisement, and I believe they got together. I wasn't there. But it must have been a real party!

The campaign swept along. We came back from a scout one afternoon when an orderly came to me with a message to report to Major Howard's tent.

Gat Howard came out of it as I came up. He had a long official envelope in his hand.

"Jack," he said, "I want you to take these dispatches and deliver them to General Sir John French in person. His headquarters are at the other side of the Assagai River, near Piet Retief. It's important that they get to him. Take another scout with you."

"Shall I start now, sir?" I asked.

"No," said Major Howard. "Wait until after dark. There are too many Boers between here and there for you to try it by daylight."

Just after sunset, with another scout, I rode out of camp. We headed for the Assagai River by bearings of my pocket compass. I knew there were several fords, and I was hoping to find one.

The ground began to get somewhat hilly. It began to rain heavily. All around us it was black as the inside of a cow. The drumming of the rain became so loud we couldn't even hear the splash of our horses' hoofs.

Then, squarely in front of us, we heard a command. "Halt!"

It was a Boer voice if ever I heard one.

"Keep on with me!" I called to the other scout.

We both gave our horses the spurs. They leaped ahead. Just then the Boer sentry fired. He missed.

In five jumps we were in the middle of a Boer camp

and shots were flashing all around us in the dark, while Boers started yelling excitedly. I suppose they thought it was a night attack.

It was our job to get through, not to fight back. We crouched over our horses' withers and rode like hell.

Suddenly my horse gave a great leap, and I felt myself falling through the air. Then came a terrific splash, and both the horse and I were under water. First we had ridden squarely into the Boer camp in the dark, and now in the dark we had ridden squarely into the Assagai River.

Luckily I kept my grip on the reins. I leaned far over the horse's neck as we came to the surface. Boer bullets were splashing the water all around us. About a hundred and fifty yards ahead, I could see the dim faint outlines of the other bank, hilly against the dark. I pointed my horse toward it, and slid back holding on to the saddle and relieving him of all my weight I could while he swam.

The other scout and I made the opposite bank amid a flurry of wild shooting. Neither of us had been hit, nor had our horses. We got away from there as fast as we could.

It was two o'clock in the morning when we heard "Halt!" again. But this time it was in good English. We answered and told the sentry: "Two of Howard's

Canadian Scouts with dispatches for General Sir John French in person."

He called the corporal of the guard. Presently we were led before the most important-looking and important-acting man I ever saw in uniform.

"Give me your dispatches," he ordered.

"Are you General Sir John French?" I asked, looking pointedly at his insignia.

"No," he said, looking at the dripping, mud-smeared pair of us. "But I *am* the brigade sergeant-major."

I'd give twenty dollars if I could reproduce his Old British Regular Army pronunciation of that title. General Sir John French never felt half as important as that sounded!

I wouldn't give him my dispatches. He wouldn't take me to General French. It was deadlock. And while the argument was at its hottest, in stepped General Sir John French himself. He had heard it from his tent near by.

I saluted and drew the dripping dispatches from inside my dripping tunic.

"You appear slightly damp, Sergeant," said General French.

"Yes, sir," I said. And I told him how we had ridden through a Boer camp and swum the river to get to him.

"Did you kill any of them?" asked General French.

"I tried to, sir," I said, "by riding them down. But I

thought it was of more importance to get these dispatches to you, sir, than to stop and shoot it out in an effort to kill a few more Boers."

General French chuckled.

"Good work," he said, taking the dispatches. Then he turned to the brigade sergeant-major.

"See that these men get some hot food and some rum," he ordered.

We got it, little as the disgruntled brigade sergeant-major liked the detail.

Up in the mountains of Swaziland near the Komati River some Boers began to concentrate, and word of it came to British headquarters. Another job for the scouts. We were ordered up there to establish contact with the Boers and report back what we found.

Into the mountains we went. We woke up and saddled high among them one morning, the date of which I'll never forget as long as I live. It was February 28, 1901.

That day started uneventfully. We were riding along the side of a rocky valley when we ran across a small detachment of Boers on the other side. We swapped a few shots across the valley with them, but they disappeared among the rocks, and nothing came of that. We continued making our way along our side of the valley. Out of sight some distance ahead of us was Major How-

ard, his orderly and a brigade staff officer, Major Beatty.

We were riding along at a leisurely pace when we heard the clatter of hoofs on the rocky trail ahead. Some rider was coming toward us. Suddenly Major Beatty himself burst into sight, galloping like mad. He pulled up his horse beside us.

"Come on, boys!" he shouted breathlessly. "Major Howard's in a hell of a jack-pot up ahead!"

He wheeled his horse on its hind feet and dashed back. We were racing at his heels. We galloped around the flank of a hill and saw ahead of us a steep valley about five hundred yards across. There was a rocky ridge on the other side. We could see some Boer wagons just under the ridge. We halted.

And as we looked, about a hundred Boers opened fire on us from behind the rocks above their wagons.

"They've got Gat Howard!" shouted Major Beatty. "We've got to get them!"

That was all we needed to know. It was Indian-fighting stuff to get at them. A charge over the open would have been suicide. We scattered and advanced from rock to rock, shooting as we came, and ducking for cover after every shot. Three other men and I worked around behind the rocks, crossed the valley under any cover we could find, and climbed that rocky ridge.

There a sweet fight started. It was rock to rock

stuff. You would push up your hat on a stick and shoot the Boer who rose up to take a shot at it. And as you shot him, you hoped no other Boer was getting on your flank or in your rear, to get you. But by scattering that way, we got the Boers in between a cross-fire. And after about an hour and a half of fighting, they retreated, leaving their wagons behind them.

Advancing cautiously, expecting ambush any minute, we got to the wagons at last.

There on the ground beside one wagon lay Gatling Gun Howard. His orderly lay dying beside him. Major Howard was dead. And his body was a sieve.

We stood there with tears running down our faces. We had seen plenty of men die, and many of them our own. But this was Gat Howard.

We propped up the dying man beside him and gave him rum.

"How did it happen?" we asked him.

He had just enough strength left to tell us.

"We came on the wagons this morning," he gasped. "There wasn't a Boer in sight. We scouted around and couldn't find any. It looked as if they had deserted the wagons to come back for them later. Gat and I stepped up to them. He found some matches in one, and was stuffing about a dozen boxes in his pocket, when some Boer fired from ambush and dropped him. That shot

didn't kill him. I opened up on the Boers, and they dropped me. They thought I was dead. They came crowding in out of their ambush, and they turned Gat over. He had fallen on his face. One of them recognized him. Those Boers crowded up around him and stood over his body and pumped shot after shot into him like a bunch of savages. They were laughing as they watched him twitch when the bullets hit him. They held their guns so close the flashes burned his uniform." A few minutes later that man was dead.

We found the boxes of matches inside Gat's tunic. We were always short of matches on the veldt. We saw where his uniform was all burned from nearly fifty or sixty shots fired with the muzzles close up against him. There was not a dry eye in the bunch.

Captain Charlie Ross rounded us up. There we stood over poor old Gat's mutilated body.

"Hold up your right hands, men," said Captain Ross.

We held up our hands.

"I want you to take an oath with me that this outfit never takes another Boer prisoner," said Charlie.

We took that oath. We swore we'd send plenty of Boers after Gat. And we did. Somewhere between three hundred and four hundred Boers died to pay for that gang who stood over Major Howard's body pumping lead into it. I got my share.

CHAPTER V

DUEL IN THE DARK

I fight for my life in the dark—A good deal in horses—The profits of pillage.

CAPTAIN CHARLIE ROSS had made us a promise.

"The first scout that brings in a Boer prisoner after this—I'll shoot him myself!" he had said as we walked away after taking that oath over Gat Howard's body.

I was the one he nearly shot a month later. I had brought in an old Boer I didn't have the heart to shoot.

That month had been marked by a daily series of savage small fights in which neither side gave any quarter. We were getting better than the Boers now, at their own game. Our own dead and wounded had paid for the lessons we had learned in ambush and sudden fierce attack, but we had learned.

That day I was sent out in command of a patrol of seven. The scouts of Botha, the Boer general, were beginning to ride that section, and it was up to us to stop them. If we could get any information out of them before we killed them, we were that much to the good.

We ambushed ourselves along a trail where I figured the Botha scouts would ride if any came that way. I had guessed right. We had been in ambush nearly an hour when two of them came riding along. Silently I signaled my men to hold fire. The two Boers, absolutely unsuspecting, rode right into our trap. When they were only a few yards away I rose up, my carbine leveled.

"Hands up!" I called to them.

One of them, a middle-aged Boer with a black beard, snapped up the rifle he was carrying across the pommel of his saddle, and took a swift pot-shot at me. The bullet cut between my arm and my side, creasing across my ribs like a hot iron. I shot him through the stomach. The other Boer held up his hands and surrendered. He was an old man with a gray beard. Somehow I was damned if I could shoot him in cold blood, or let my men shoot him, either. He was too much like an old patriarch. We questioned them both, but couldn't get anything out of them.

I saw that the Boer I had shot couldn't live long. We stretched him out and made him as comfortable as we could, and went back into ambush. Nothing more came our way.

That night we camped there, and that night the wounded Boer died. Before he passed out he told me

his name was Jan Pottgeiter, and asked me to tell his family how he had died. He said I would find his wife and daughters at a farmhouse some miles away.

He had been riding a magnificent black stallion. It was better than any horse in my string. I took it for my best mount.

Next morning we rode into camp with the old Boer prisoner. Captain Ross saw us.

"Who took that prisoner?" he demanded.

Nobody said a word. But I was in command of the detachment.

Wheeling toward me, Charlie Ross drew his pistol. Just as he was raising it to shoot me, some of the boys leaped at him, grabbed his wrist, and took the weapon away from him. They wouldn't give it back to him until after he cooled off.

That experience was bad enough, but a week later I was let in for one that at the time seemed almost worse.

With a small detachment I had been riding the veldt on a scout. Our canteens were empty, after a long ride. Some distance away I saw a farmhouse. We rode over to it to get some water.

A Boer housewife came to the door. She took one look at the stallion I was riding, and beginning to scream, she went into violent hysterics. Some girls came running out of the house as they heard her screams.

Then they saw the stallion too, and they began screaming hysterical curses at me, worse than their mother.

Without knowing it, I had ridden up to Jan Pottgeiter's house.

We rode away without the water. It was the most uncomfortable five minutes I had ever spent in my life.

Jan would have got me if I hadn't got him. He shot first, too. But you can't explain that sort of thing to a group of hysterical women.

A few days later I had a more uncomfortable time than that. It was a battle in the dark I'll remember as long as I live.

I started out that morning, leading my squad on another scout. We had scattered some distance apart to cover more ground. I was riding alone down a rocky gully when some shots rang out and my horse went down, instantly killed. I crawled over behind a rock. Peering out I saw a couple of Boers peeping around the side of another rock. I pumped some shots at them. They ducked back again. We swapped shots for nearly half an hour, but all of us were experts at keeping cover, and I couldn't damage them any more than they could damage me.

Then the rest of my men, drawn there by the sound of the shooting, rode up and scattered the Boers. I had ridden into a nest of only half a dozen Boer snipers in

ambush. They dashed for their horses, which had been hidden behind other rocks, and rode away at a gallop.

"Go ahead with your scout," I told my men. "I don't think there are any more snipers around here. There is a Boer farmhouse about fifteen miles away across the veldt. I can make it on foot and sleep there. It's deserted. If the main column doesn't make it by to-night they will to-morrow morning. There's no need for any of your horses to try to carry double."

They rode off and resumed their scout. I tramped away across the veldt.

It was around noon when I started. It was about six o'clock that night when I reached the farmhouse. It was deserted, as it had been when I first rode past it. It had been an afternoon of hard hot foot-slogging across some rough veldt. I was tired and thirsty and hungry. I drank some water and ate a little cold food. There wasn't a sign of the column in sight. I decided to doss down for the night. In a rear room I found a mattress on the floor. I stretched out and went to sleep.

It was between nine and ten o'clock that night when I awoke suddenly. A storm had started. Rain was falling, thunder was grumbling away and there were occasional flashes of lightning. But that wasn't what had wakened me. I could hear two human voices. They were talking Dutch, which by now I could understand

rather well. From their talk to each other I learned that the two Boers had been riding past in the night and had decided to take refuge in the house until the storm was over.

I knew then it was going to be a duel to the death in the dark. Neither side was giving much quarter at that stage of the war.

I drew both my Colts and crawled silently to the door of my room. It opened on another room which in turn opened on a third. In the blackness I stood up, sheltering myself as much as I could behind the door-jamb, the pistol in my right hand cocked and ready for action.

Then a flash of lightning revealed the two Boers standing in the doorway across the middle room. I fired twice. I heard one Boer fall to the floor. Then a streak of fire that wasn't lightning shot across the blackness toward me. The other Boer had opened fire with his pistol.

It was Mauser against Colt there in the dark. And the lightning obstinately refused to flash again.

We shot at each other's pistol flashes. After every shot we changed position. We must have fired thirty shots between us in that blackness, and we missed every time.

It was a tight hole. Each of us tried every trick that war had taught us. We would fall down after the other

fired, hoping he would think he had hit the mark and come to investigate. Neither fell for that trick.

We would hold our pistols far to one side and shoot, hoping to get in another shot at the enemy, when he shot at the flash. But every bullet missed.

And with the excitement making our hearts and lungs pump like fire-engines, both of us were trying to breathe softly lest the sound of our own breathing would give the other a target in the dark. It was nerve-stretching work.

At last I managed to get back silently into the doorway from which I had shot the first Boer. Cautiously, not making a sound, I stretched myself flat on the floor. The pistol in my right hand was pointing just past the edge of the opening into the other room. I lay there, every muscle stretched taut and tense, peering into the dark with my right eye.

And then that blessed lightning flashed again. It showed me the remaining Boer leaning forward around the corner of that other door across the room. Like two fencers, each had duplicated the other's moves.

I fired three times, as fast as I could work that heavy Colt. One of the three bullets got him. I knew by the way he fell, and by the way his Mauser clattered to the floor, that this was no trick.

Still I was taking no chances. I holstered one pistol,

held the other cocked and ready, and still keeping myself partly sheltered by the door, I lighted a match with my weaponless hand.

There they both lay, sprawled on the floor.

There was about an inch of candle in the room where I had slept. I lighted it and went over to the bodies to make sure.

Each Boer had a Colt .45 through the heart.

I took their weapons and their horses, which I found outside, and rode off through the storm until I reached the column. Those camp-fires looked good when I found them, and the British challenge "Halt!" as I came up to the outposts was certainly music.

The weeks rolled along, each day with its quota of excitement. Then one day, at the end of a long scout, we found ourselves at the head village of the king of the Swazis.

"Let's pay a formal call on his Majesty," I suggested. The detachment were all for it.

The Swazis are worth knowing. They are an offshoot of the Zulus, who are the premier race of Africa. They are magnificent fighting men, superbly tall, muscular, lithe and dark bronze in color. They'll go out after a lion with nothing but a spear and a knife—and they'll bring the lion-pelt home. The bigger ones as they get old seem to run to fat.

We found a Swazi who could understand a mixture of English and Dutch. Through him we sent word to the king that we had come to pay our respects. Presently he returned and told us to come with him.

The king of the Swazis received us in his most formal costume. He was wearing an ancient high silk hat with a gold band around it. A long black frock coat was buttoned tightly around his bulging body. In front of it on a belt hung a leopard-skin pouch, worn as a Scot in kilts would wear his sporran. Beneath all this his long, bronze, bare shanks stuck out. He wore no trousers and he was barefoot.

When we came into his reception hut, he was seated in a French drawing-room gilt chair, holding a huge wooden scepter with a gilded crown carved at one end.

We exchanged compliments through his interpreter. Then he permitted his wives and daughters to come out and have a look at us. We stood inspection from the ladies of the royal family. All but three of that crowd of Swazi women were practically as naked as the day they were born. Those three looked overdressed. They wore a girdle apiece. Each girdle was a length of string from which hung three silver five-shilling pieces.

And we kept our faces straight! Not a laugh was heard from one of us until, the audience ended, we had

ridden at least a mile away. It doesn't pay to laugh at that kind of king or his family until you are out of range.

A few days later we got word that a band of Boers were some distance away, guarding a huge herd of cattle for the Boer Army. We mounted and made a forced march to the place.

The Boers opened fire on us as soon as they sighted us at the head of the valley where they had concentrated the cattle. We had a sharp short scrap, and charging into them, drove them in retreat. We chased them some distance across the veldt, and then returned to the cattle.

We had captured fourteen thousand head. The beasts, half wild and with long sharp horns, were in a valley about seven miles long and a mile wide. One end and both sides of the valley were almost vertical walls of cliffs a thousand feet high. All over the valley grew mimosa trees with sharp thorns that tore at you like knife blades.

Ten of us, including myself, were ordered to stay there and guard the cattle while the rest of the outfit rode back to the column to have a lot of men sent up to drive the cattle away. Several of our guard had been Canadian cowboys. They told the rest of us that we must spend the night riding slowly around the valley and singing softly to keep the cattle from getting fright-

ened and stampeding. The animals were still restless, probably from the shooting and the excitement of the scrap when we had driven away the Boers.

Every now and then throughout the night some of them would begin to bawl out and stir around. It was ticklish work for us. Riding around and singing when you knew that if a stampede started you'd be trampled into pink jelly was rough on the nerves. I was scared stiff. But they didn't stampede.

Then came a chance for a little profit to relieve the monotony of excitement. With some other scouts I was sent south into Natal, riding herd on a drove of one thousand captured horses. We scouts had added to the drove two hundred horses we had captured ourselves. We sold them for five pounds sterling a head to mounted infantry officers who wanted personal mounts. That thousand pounds sterling, split among the ten of us, made a pleasant addition to the shilling, seven pence, ha'penny a day his* Brittanic Majesty was paying us.

On the way back north, after we had delivered the thousand horses to a government kraal, we rode past a luxurious house that some of us recognized from pictures as the home of General Louis Botha, the Boer leader. The British Army had kept it under guard. We

* Queen Victoria had been dead three months then.

dismounted and went up to the door, hoping we could coax the guard into letting us look through the house. How the Boer general lived at home would be something to tell our own folks back home.

For some reason or other, there was no guard in the house. Nothing had been disturbed inside, but the place was absolutely deserted.

The first thing we saw in the living-room was a grand piano. One of us was a musician. He sat down and struck a few chords. It was a magnificent instrument.

"This is my share of the loot," he laughed. "I'll take this home with me to Canada."

"The hell you will," said another of my men. "I'll fix that!"

With his carbine butt he smashed down on that beautiful ivory keyboard, crushing in a dozen keys.

I put a stop to that sort of thing right there. Looting is all right. It is part of every war. But wanton smashing of beautiful things is something else again.

"You boys can take anything you can carry with you," I told my detachment, "but the man who smashes anything goes under arrest and takes a court-martial."

We scattered and ranged through the house. I found a beautiful set of flat silver for the dinner table. A dozen each of knives and forks and all the various kinds of spoons, of plain heavy sterling silver, marked with the general's initials "L. B." They made a package I

could carry easily. There was a souvenir for you! I got them away to England, clean. And I'm damned if they weren't stolen from me there. We were on leave in London one night, and the Irish raided our quarters at Shorncliffe Barracks, where we were stationed. Some Irish soldier who never got out of England in the whole war got those pieces out of my kit. I suppose they were melted up in some fence that bought them for their weight in silver. I never have heard of them again.

And that was the only decent loot I ever got in that war. The English weren't allowed to loot. Their officers watched against it and heavy punishment followed detection. But the Canadians could loot and did. I noticed that the English officers didn't mind buying ducks and chickens and pigs and horses from us Canadians. I suppose they thought we had farms somewhere in Africa and raised them!

We loafed around Pretoria two or three weeks, glad of the rest, after that horse-driving detail. Then we were sent to the north in the Riet River mountain district southeast of the Limpopo. Quite a lot of scrapping followed. It was mountain work, grown so familiar to us now that it had got to be routine.

Then the information reached our officers one day that a bunch of Boers were visiting somewhere in those mountains, and I was one of a detachment that they sent to investigate.

CHAPTER VI

THE HERO'S RETURN

The end of the war—I receive decorations from royalty.

ALL that day we rode without seeing a single Boer. At nightfall we ate some cold food and Captain Charlie Ross decided to push on. We rode along through the deepening dark. It was after nine o'clock that night when the trail led down into a deep ravine. We scouted it.

The ravine was about a mile long. At its end was a cliff that was topped by a plateau. But there was a trail up the cliff that a horse could climb.

"Sergeant Randell," said the captain, "you will stay here at the foot of the cliff and guard this pass. I'm going ahead with the rest of the outfit. In case any Boers slip down this trail after we've gone on, you open fire on them from this cover, and try to stop them. We won't go so far but that we can hear the shooting, and we'll ride back."

They rode on up the cliff trail. I settled down to wait. It was about ten o'clock, and very dark. I could see the

outlines of the mountains and of trees against the sky from where I stood. In the quiet I could hear a brook running close by me. I could even hear the rustle of the leaves in the trees.

If I could hear things as plainly as that, so could the Boers, if there were any of them around. I led my horse under a tree and took out his bit so he wouldn't champ and make a noise. I tied him there and went back to my ambush by the trail.

I had a long wait ahead. My crowd wouldn't be back until about two or three o'clock in the morning. There were only six of us in all. We didn't expect to encounter any large body of Boers—any commando, as we called them. There wasn't any Boer commando abroad, then, as far as we knew. If we found any Boers at all, they would just be small parties.

Time crawls on a job like that. I waited a while and looked at my watch. I thought it would be midnight. It wasn't even eleven o'clock yet. I sneaked a quiet smoke, which was absolutely against orders. It was damned lonesome. Midnight arrived after a year or two. I sneaked another smoke. This wouldn't do.

I stood there behind my ambush by the trail, and began to study the stars and the sky-line and the silhouette of the gap the pass made in the cliff.

Then suddenly I stiffened. I could hear whisperings

and chattering somewhere. This wasn't the brook. Nor was it the rustling of the leaves. I couldn't hear the sound of a step anywhere, nor the clink of horse equipment. But those whisperings and chatterings kept on. Then I heard a movement up on the cliff.

I leaned forward, my carbine ready, and stared at the sky-line. Solid things make a silhouette when they get between you and the darkest sky. Then I saw it. There was a figure standing on the edge of the cliff, about a hundred yards away from me. The whisperings and faint chatterings kept up. Evidently the Boers were going to rush me. The thought of old Gat Howard and what had happened to him flashed into my memory.

I fired pointblank at the figure on the cliff. It leaped high in the air and fell, rolling almost at my feet.

Then came a chorus of the most demoniac shrieks and howls I ever heard in my life. The rush of a charge came toward me. More of those blood-curdling shrieks and unearthly howls sounded in my ears. Then I saw my attackers weren't men.

I was beset by a band of giant baboons!

I blazed away at them as they came on until my carbine was empty. I dropped it close by my feet where I could pick it up and use it for a club if I had to, drew both of my Colts, and kept on blazing away. I don't know how many of them I dropped in that rush. But

thank God, by the time I had emptied all three weapons, I had scared them off.

Shrieking and howling, they scurried away amid the trees. I reloaded as fast as I could. My fingers were shaking. I had heard stories of men torn limb from limb and chewed to shreds by those giant baboons. I got by the tree where my horse was tied, and bridled him again.

Through the trees was sounding that chorus of shrieks, which echoed and reechoed from the high cliffs behind me. If they had charged again, I would have leaped on my horse and fled. But presently the other scouts of the detachment came riding back at the gallop. They had heard the shooting. They started shouting for me. The baboons vanished.

When I looked at my hair the next morning, I expected to find it white. The other fellows didn't laugh at me either, when I told them of my scare. They had heard of those giant baboons too.

Two weeks later, and just before we left for home, one of our crowd bought one of these baboons. It had been captured when a baby, and was quite tame. It was about five feet tall, as far as I can remember, and would run behind the horse with a string around its neck. It hated water except to drink, and whenever we came to a spruit or brook, the baboon would leap up behind his

owner, and squat on the horse's back, grinning and chattering until dry ground was reached, then he would hop off again and lope along behind the horse.

We took that big fellow to England with us and he was given to the Zoo in London. He is there now probably.

Then the Boer War ended. I got back to Cape Town at last, somewhat more seasoned than the young sailor who had stepped off the *Rollin' Polly* in a Canadian artilleryman's uniform, though I had thought then that I was salted all the way through.

There were the usual reunions and parties, with every man telling how he had won the war personally, or how, if he hadn't done it all himself, his outfit had.

Presently I was notified that I had been allotted passage on the steamship *Rosslyn Castle* for Southampton. I went aboard feeling like a millionaire. Between selling captured horses to English mounted infantry officers, and the poker game that was running every idle moment with Howard's Canadian Scouts, I had a waist-belt, two arm-belts and two leg-belts packed full of golden sovereigns. I never even stopped to count them.

Eight of us, all friends, found ourselves on the *Rosslyn Castle*. We stuck together all that voyage. The rest of the crowd aboard christened us the Chosen Few. Our private poker game started at Cape Town. It ended at

Southampton. All the way between, twenty-four hours a day, the stuff for a Rajah's Peg was on ice. A Rajah's Peg is a high-ball, but for whisky you use liqueur brandy, and for soda-water you use dry champagne. The effect is superb.

Twenty-four hours outside of Southampton I had lost two thousand dollars in that poker game. But the last night at sea, the stakes were high and my luck came back. I won back all I had lost and then took in five hundred pounds sterling more.

I stepped ashore at Southampton with two thousand pounds sterling—nearly ten thousand dollars.

You could never tell by his rank how much money a man had in the Boer War crowd. On the *Rosslyn Castle* with us and my roommate that voyage was Private Hurst, of the Imperial Yeomanry. When he came aboard at Cape Town he brought with him fifteen thousand dollars in gold—three thousand pounds sterling—to pay for his gambling and his liquor on the voyage. He fought through the war as a private, but back home in England he had a title, a big estate and a huge income.

From Southampton we headed straight for London. We owned the city. The American Bar at the Chandos Hotel, where they had the only decent cocktails in London, was made headquarters. The party started. But before they got all my two thousand pounds, I was

assigned to a berth in an outgoing ship, and sailed for Quebec.

It was in the autumn of 1901 that I landed in Quebec. I had been away from Newfoundland since 1896. I headed straight for home, partly across country and partly by mail boat.

I didn't know it at the time, but when my telegram that I was on my way reached home, Pat Hanlon, one old neighbor, took an oath.

"Here's the first Newfoundland boy home from the Boer War. Nobody in the world but me, meself, will drive him home from the wharf!" swore Pat. He arranged with the captain of the mail boat to fly flag signals that I was aboard when he came into the harbor, so Pat could get out his old horse and buggy for the triumphal parade.

Through one delay or another, I was three weeks late, at that. And when the mail boat neared the harbor at home, I was below, deep in a poker game. Somebody called me on deck. I went top-side to find the old packet all dressed up like a bride with all the flags in her locker flying.

"What signal is that?" I asked the captain. "Have you been developing some new signal stuff while I've been in the army?"

"It's the signal to old Pat Hanlon," he laughed. "It means: 'Jack's aboard.' "

Then I looked ashore. The old home town had broken out every flag they had, too. They were even flying red flannel petticoats and red handkerchiefs from some of the houses! And it looked as if every soul in town was rushing to the wharf.

It's great to be a home-coming hero!

Pat Hanlon, with his old horse and buggy, was at the dock. I was lifted aboard the buggy the minute I stepped ashore.

Up the road toward my father's house the parade started, Pat Hanlon in the lead. Cheers and music sounded everywhere. The boys I had grown up with had built a miniature fort just back of our house. They had mounted some old French brass muzzle-loading cannon on the ramparts. They began firing salutes. They loaded those old guns so heavily that their powder only lasted for four shots! It was a fine racket while it lasted, though. And other boys were there with old muzzle-loading sealing guns to take up the bombardment where the cannon left off.

It was almost as much shooting as I'd ever heard at one time in the war.

My mother had set long tables in the yard. There wasn't room enough in three houses to hold our old friends who came crowding in with baskets and hampers of delicacies to add their share to the feast. That was a real party.

Before the echoes of it had time to die away, the Duke and Duchess of York, now King George V and Queen Mary, of England, arrived in St. John's on the *Ophir*, on their tour around the world. And by that time Charlie Foran, another Newfoundland boy who was a veteran of the Boer War, had come back home.

Charlie and I were notified that the Duke of York was going to present us with our South African War medals.

Our orders were to be waiting in our South African khaki on the wharf at St. John's when he landed. First the members of the Newfoundland Cabinet and Legislative Assembly were to be presented to their Royal Highnesses, also my father and two elder sisters, and then Charlie and I were to step up and get our medals.

We polished ourselves up, rode our horses down to the wharf, tied them under the wharf-shed, and were waiting on foot when the Duke and Duchess came down the gangway. Presently we were summoned to come forward. Having been a sergeant, I was in the lead. Charlie, a private, followed close behind.

I stepped up, saluted and stood at attention. My medals in his hand, the Duke of York stepped forward. The Duchess of York stood a few feet away smiling.

"Would your Royal Highness allow *her* Royal Highness to pin those medals on my breast?" I asked.

"Of course. With pleasure," he said.

The Duchess of York stepped forward, smiling again, took the medals from her husband's hand, and pinned them on my tunic. Then the Duke pinned Charlie's medals on him and we saluted and retired.

Charlie Foran had been tongue-tied up to then. Now as we got back amid the crowd he leaned forward and whispered in my ear:

"You bloody jackass! You've got the nerve of a brass monkey!"

I grinned at him and then craned to see the show. Very suddenly it became quite a show. The carriage was waiting to take the Duke and Duchess from the wharf up through St. John's to the Government House. They climbed aboard it. The procession started. The royal salute of twenty-one guns began booming out.

Long before this St. John's had had a mounted police force. But by this time it had dwindled down to one man—old Inspector-General O'Sullivan. And O'Sullivan's horse simply went crazy over the unaccustomed sound of the cannon firing. Half a dozen times O'Sullivan fought to mount him, but the horse pitched and plunged so badly that he couldn't get his leg across the saddle. And he was supposed to ride as escort at the right of the royal carriage.

O'Sullivan gave it up in despair.

"Randell! Jack Randell!" the inspector-general yelled at me. "For God's sake, get on your horse and get up there on the right side of the carriage and act as escort!"

By now the royal carriage was passing up the street through the Triumphal Arch that St. John's had erected for the occasion. Charlie Foran and I leaped into our saddles and galloped up to the carriage, he on the left, I on the right. The parade was on.

We were passing along Military Road, with a dense crowd lining the street and cheering, when a six-year-old boy named Williams began to shout to his mother. His shrill little voice sounded above the cheering.

"Hey, mother! There's Jack Randell, the South African soldier! Look at him! Look at him!"

Nobody within earshot could help hearing him. The Duke and Duchess of York looked up at me. I was as red as a beet. They were smiling.

"We see who is the *real* celebrity here to-day," smiled the Duchess.

I nearly fell off my horse. But for the next five days Charlie Foran and I were their official escorts.

A man can't spend the rest of his life just being a returned war hero. I had a glorious loaf and a lot of glorious reunions, and then I knew it was time for me to get back to sea.

Early in 1902 I signed on as mate of the bark *Sun-*



Sergeant Randell acts as an escort for the Duke and Duchess of York, now the King and Queen of England, at St. John's, Newfoundland. Sergeant Randell is the mounted figure on the right



The *Sand Grouse*, sand pump suction and reclamation hopper dredge, salvaged off the coast of West Africa by Captain Randell



One of the fleet of suction pump reclamation dredges which Captain Randell took from Renfrew to Reval, as the employee of the Russian Imperial Government in 1912

beam. Old Jock Kendrick was her master, a real south-of-England salt if ever there was one. You didn't need to have a mate's ticket under him, but you did need to know your job. We got along fine. We sailed from St. John's to Pernambuco and then to Parahyba do Norte.

A judge of the Supreme Court of Parahyba was an old friend of my elder brother. I dined with him one night. When I started for the wharf to go back to my ship, I found the mosquitoes out in clouds, billions strong. They were so bad that when I reached the wharf I found the wharf watchman was walking along swinging a smudge-pot.

An old American nigger named Joe was the boatman who usually rowed me out to my ship. I routed him out from his sleep under a mosquito bar on the wharf. But he struck.

"Boss," he protested, "dem skeeters am too thick t' take yo' out t'night. W'y don' yo' stay asho', suh?"

I couldn't stay ashore. I had to be aboard my ship that night. So I got Joe to lend me an old canoe and a paddle.

I was in the usual evening clothes of the tropics—white duck, white shoes, Panama hat. The river was low. I tried to push the canoe down the slanting soft mud-bank, without getting myself all smeared with that sticky black mud.

The canoe stuck. I pushed hard. Suddenly it slid as if greased. I fell forward into it, sprawled on my stomach. I left my once-white shoes behind me, sticking in the mud. Still flat on my stomach in that canoe I shot across the Parahyba River, which was none too wide at that point, and landed in a mangrove swamp.

The paddle was lost in the shuffle and was floating down the stream. Mosquitoes descended on me in a solid, singing, stinging mass.

There was no other way out of it. I dived into the river and swam three hundred yards to the *Sunbeam*. My eyes were swollen nearly shut from mosquito bites by the time I got aboard.

Then we came back to Newfoundland.

The bark *Carpasian* was in port when we landed. Captain Goss, her master, needed a mate. Still without a ticket I signed on for the job and headed south for Brazil again. That was another voyage I'll never forget. On it I nearly lost my left arm.

Far to the south one day the *Carpasian* was caught in a squall in the southwest monsoons. The sudden smash of the wind carried away our maintopgallantsail. We unbent the ribbons that were left and started to bend on a new topgallantsail. The usual procedure is to hoist the sail up on what is known as a gant-line.

I was up on the yard, steadying the new topgallantsail

as she came up. Then the seizing of the gant-line block carried away. The gant-line ran across my left forearm, cutting through the flesh to the bone and pinning my arm against the topgallant-yard.

The men below on deck could not understand what was the matter. But from my grimaces and the contortions of my face they realized that something had happened. I had just sense enough left to grab a gasket and pass it around my body with a turn on the jack-iron. Then I passed out cold, swinging in air up there, completely unconscious.

There I swung, dead to the world. The men swarmed up the ratlines and lowered me down on the deck. When I came back to consciousness, the first thing that I wished was that I could pass out again, the pain was so excruciating.

They dressed and bandaged the wound the best they could. But infection developed in it. My arm swelled to the size of my thigh.

I was the only man on board with any medical knowledge. I had studied hard to learn how to treat the wounds and injuries and diseases that are always cropping up aboard sailing ships. Now it was up to me to prescribe for myself. Castor oil and Epsom salts were the limit of old Captain Goss' treatment for anything.

The infection kept getting worse. At one time it

looked to me as if I would have to supervise the amputation of my own arm, it got so bad. Several times I lanced it myself, to drain and clean the wound. But at last it began to mend. The arm is as good as ever to-day, but I'll carry that scar to my grave.

I'll carry to my grave another scar, too, that I got on that voyage. It's the mark of a wound that earned me the nick-name of the "Hopper." This is the way I earned it.

On sailing ships we went around on deck barefoot much of the time in those days. I was supervising the hoisting of the royal-yard out of the hold.

Eyes aloft, I stepped back from the hatch, and with my bare foot stepped squarely with all my weight on the sharp edge of an empty square tin can that had been used to bring up some kerosene oil to clean the winch. Some sailor, carelessly, had left it there on the deck.

It cut my foot almost in two, as clean as a knife blade.

Blood gushed out in a stream. Captain Goss took one look and flopped cold on the poop, in a dead faint.

Holding my wounded foot in the air, I hopped aft on the other, got to my room, and dressed the wound. Unlike Captain Goss, I couldn't afford the luxury of fainting. But after I had the blood staunched and the wound bandaged tightly, I felt myself beginning to slip.

I poured a water tumbler full of ship's rum, and

gulped it neat. It saved me from making a show of myself.

There was no offshore liquor limit in those days. We carried plenty of rum as part of the ship's standard stores. In fact it was usual in those old days in sail, when shortening sail and the watch below came on deck, to call all hands aft and "splice the main-brace." That meant a stiff tot of rum for everybody aboard. It helped.

It helped me now. I even kept my watch on deck, hopping about the deck on my one good foot. I kept on hopping until the wound was healed.

And for years after that I was never Jack Randell to the gang on the old *Carpasian*. To them I was always the "Hopper."

CHAPTER VII

ON THE QUARTER-DECK

I return to steam—Become an amateur prize-fighter and receive my master's papers.

BY NOW I had made up my mind I was going to get my master's ticket as soon as I possibly could. I had begun to realize that it was getting me nowhere to go knocking around the world with no more ticket than a cabin-boy, no matter how good a sailor I might be. And ~~as~~ much as I loved sail, I could see that the sailing ship was doomed. Whether I liked it or not, steam was the thing. And I needed some more experience in steam.

I quit my berth as mate on the *Carpasian*, and signed on in New York as quartermaster on the crack liner *St. Paul*, which was running between New York and Southampton. That was the winter of 1903. It didn't take me long to learn what I wanted to know. But a quartermaster's pay isn't the highest in the world, and I needed some money. That sent me back into sail again. I left the *St. Paul* and got a berth as mate on the old

American bark *El Maranda*. She was on the Atlantic coast run.

We put into Boston in the middle of some typical New England zero weather, that winter. I had gone into the city for dinner that night, and was back on the water-front heading for my ship when I bumped into a poor devil huddled against the wall of a building. With the thermometer still at zero and an icy wind cutting in like a knife off the harbor, he was standing there coatless, his hands rammed into the pockets of a pair of thin trousers, shaking from cold like an ague victim. I took one look at him.

"Broke?" I asked him. It was a needless question, at that. He was flat broke and starving. He would have been dead by morning.

"Come along with me," I told him. I took him to a water-front bar and got a couple of quick drinks into him to warm him up. Then we went to a near-by restaurant and I filled him full of hot food. After that he told me his story. I have verified it since. He was the son of a San Francisco millionaire, and a university graduate. He had run through all the money his father gave him, and piled up debts so many times and raised so much hell that at last his father had cut him off. I sympathized with the lad, then. I've sympathized with the father, ever since.

I took the boy aboard ship with me, and though he knew nothing whatever of a sailor's job, I signed him on as one of the crew and got him an outfit. That kept him from freezing or starving to death, at any rate.

We sailed out of Boston for New York a few days later and struck New York in weather just as rotten as we had left at Boston. The boy didn't have enough money coming to him to take care of him, so I took him with me to Steve Pyle's famous old boarding-house for mates and masters at the old Coenties Slip. I felt somehow that I couldn't turn him loose on his own just yet.

I was pretty short of cash myself just then, and I couldn't get an advance. So the pair of us presently were down to a couple of thin dimes. You can't do much in New York on that.

We were walking up the old Bowery one night, trying to figure out some way to get by until the ship sailed. As we trudged along through the bitter cold we passed some sort of a sporting club. There was a big sign over the door. I stopped to read it. It offered fifty dollars to any man who could stay five rounds with a boxer who was taking on all comers inside.

"We can use that fifty dollars," I told the San Francisco boy.

"You've got to get it first," he said.

"I'll get it," I told him. "Come on."

We went in. There was the ring in the middle of the place, with a lot of patrons sitting around at the tables, drinking.

"Where's the manager?" I asked one of them.

The man was pointed out to me. I walked over to him.

"I've come for my fifty dollars," I told him by way of introduction.

"You'll be lucky if you don't go out on a stretcher," he grinned.

"Trying to bluff me out of my money?" I asked him.

"Come along back with me," he said.

In a dirty little back room he tossed me a fighter's kit of gloves and shoes and trunks.

"Get 'em on, and we'll all go to the funeral," said the manager.

I stripped and got into the outfit.

"Hey, Bill," the manager called down a little back corridor, "here's another candidate."

Then he led me out into the ring. I sat in my corner waiting for a few minutes, when in tramped a big gorilla of a heavy-weight who climbed through the ropes, sat down in the opposite corner, and began glaring at me.

The manager made his announcement, a bell rang

somewhere, the stool on which I was sitting was pulled out from under me, and the big gorilla came across the ring at me.

I had figured it out that he couldn't damage me much more than some of the sailors I had had to fight aboard ship as mate. I wasn't even figuring on trying to damage him. It was the fifty dollars I wanted, and I'd get that fifty if I only stayed. And nobody had ever knocked me out in my life.

I kept covered up, my jaw and my heart protected, as he hammered away at me, and took a poke at the gorilla now and then when I thought I could get away with it. Once I was lucky and landed on the side of his jaw. I was surprised to see that the blow rocked him. Once I got in a clean right to the pit of his stomach. It doubled him up, but he came back. He was using swings mostly—wild haymakers—and I took them on my shoulders and on the sides of my head.

Almost before I knew it the five rounds were over, and there I was still on my feet. I hadn't been knocked off them even once. I straightened up as the bell rang for the end of the fifth round.

"Where's my fifty dollars?" I asked the manager, leaning over the ropes where he sat at the ringside. He reached into his trousers pocket, pulled out a roll of bank-notes and peeled off five tens.

"Stick that wad under my glove-lacing," I told him.

He grinned and pushed the money in between my glove and my wrist. Then an idea struck me. I wasn't even winded, let alone being hurt.

"I'll stay another five rounds for another fifty," I offered.

"You're a sport, son," said the manager. "You're on."

The next five rounds were like the first. I was so hard from sea life that the gorilla couldn't seem to hurt me much. He kept on boring in and swinging those wild haymakers, trying to connect with my jaw. The crowd were on their feet now, yelling for him to knock me out. But that wasn't my night to be knocked out.

In the middle of the eighth round, the gorilla grew winded from his own efforts. His guard lowered a little bit. I opened up and popped him with the fastest left and right I could put over. The left closed one eye for him. The right started his nose bleeding. Then he covered up and stalled through what was left of that round.

His seconds worked over him as the round ended, and when the bell rang for the ninth, he came rushing out of his corner at me, swinging those same haymakers. He was mad, now, and he left himself as wide open as a Newfoundland barn door.

I stepped into the opening. I hit him in the stomach with my left. It doubled him over. Just as he jack-

knifed forward, I smashed in with my right and caught him squarely on the point of the chin. He went flat to the canvas.

But that boy could take it!

He was up on his feet at the count of nine. But the fight was all out of him. He covered up every minute of that round, and every minute of the tenth. I couldn't get inside his guard to knock him out.

When the bell rang for the end of the tenth, I was working on him like a pile-driver. The crowd was on its feet, crazy as a lot of lunatics, yelling for me to knock him out.

The manager followed me back to the dressing-room. He paid me the second fifty dollars.

"I want to sign you up," he said. "I'll make a middle-weight or a light heavy-weight champion out of you, or I'm a liar."

"I'm sorry, old-timer," I told him, "but I'm afraid you're a liar."

We both grinned. I was out to get my master's ticket. Back home they'd respect that. But what the hell did they care about a prize-fighter, even if he was champion!

With the hundred dollars in my pocket I rode back with the San Francisco boy to Steve Pyle's. We ate a couple of square meals apiece and went to bed. That

very night, while I was sound asleep, he got up and dressed, and slipped out of the house with everything I had. He even stole my sextant.

It was only four years ago I ran into him in Nassau. And the poor devil was too much of a wreck from liquor to lick.

I walked out of Steve Pyle's place next day feeling that I had all the luck in the world, and it was all hard. But that very day, cleaned out to the clothes I had on me, I got a berth as second mate on the British steamer *Hill Glen*, an eighty-five-hundred-ton tramp running from New York to China and Japan. Her charter was up. We went down to Savannah, Georgia, empty, and loaded cotton for Bremerhaven, Germany. From there we steamed to Cardiff, Wales, where I dropped off her. I wanted to go up for my examinations for my mate's ticket, there. But I learned that I didn't have enough money to keep me ashore until the examinations were over. So I signed on as third mate on the *Egremont Castle*, an English tramp steamer. We went to Vera Cruz, Mexico, with a cargo of coal. And there yellow fever broke out on board. The second engineer died of it. But at last we got away and steamed to Pensacola, Florida, where they kept us twenty-one days in quarantine.

Out of quarantine at last, we loaded pitch-pine lum-

ber and logs for Le Havre, France. And out in the Atlantic we stuck our nose into the tail-end of a hurricane. It washed our deck-load clean over the side. And when that load went over into the Atlantic, it took damned near everything above deck level with it. But we made Le Havre at last. And then we crossed to a Bristol Channel port, where I was paid off.

Now I had money enough to keep me a while. I headed for Cardiff to take my examinations for my second-mate's ticket. I had behind me nine years and nine months of sea service time, over four years of it as second and third mate in steam and second mate and mate in sail.

Old Captain Bentley, bless him, gave me my examinations. He was one of the strictest examiners in Great Britain. And he was a fanatic for sail. He hated steam as the saints are supposed to hate the devil. He didn't ask me one single question in seamanship.

"I take your knowledge of seamanship for granted on the face of your record and the cut of your jib," he told me. "Why waste time?"

He passed me with flying colors. At last I was a certificated officer of the British Mercantile Marine.

My ticket would be coming up from London two or three weeks later. I left the examiner's office with my

blue paper in my hand. I was heading for the nearest pub to "wet my ticket with the boys."

And the first man I ran into on the street was old Captain Tom Bowline. Wasn't that a proper name for a sailor! He was master of the steamer *Harbart*. And he was looking for a second mate. He gave me the job right there, and went along with me to wet my ticket.

There was the finest skipper I ever sailed under, and the most home-like ship I ever sailed on. Two years and three months I was with the *Harbart*, making Australia, India, China, Japan and South America with general cargo. He was like a father to me; and his wife was like a mother.

Mrs. Bowline was the most beautiful woman I ever saw in this world until I met my own wife. She sailed with her husband often.

Their youngest boy was born at sea while we were on our way to South Africa, one voyage. We had no doctor aboard. I helped bring that baby into the world, and eighteen months later the little chap died in my arms while we were in port at Hamburg.

We even had an orchestra of our own on the *Harbart*. Three engineers played the violin and guitar, and I did my bit on the tin whistle! But the orchestra was broken up when our third engineer walked off the end of the pier one dark night at Simonstown, South Africa, and

was drowned. Like most sailors, he couldn't swim a stroke.

Back in Cardiff once more, I went up for my first mate's ticket. Again I faced old Captain Bentley, the examiner—and I got the damndest calling down I ever got in my life. He hated to see a young sailor who had started properly in square-riggers go into steam. But he passed me. For the second time I left his office with my blue paper in my hand, on my way to wet my new ticket, as is the tradition of the sea. As I walked along the street I wondered if I'd run into a job on the pavement again, as I had with my first ticket.

And I'm hanged if I didn't. Just outside the pub I met Captain Davis. He had been second mate on the old *Hill Glen* when I was third. Now he was master of her. And he was looking for a mate. He signed me on at once, and side by side we went into the pub to celebrate.

We cleared from Cardiff for Rio de Janeiro with coal. Rio was rocking with rioters from a big labor strike when we landed, and we had to discharge our cargo ourselves. We went next to the River Plate to load grain for Antwerp. And there I left the *Hill Glen* to go as second mate on the *Banana*, a steamer of the Elder Dempster line for the West Coast of Africa. The *Banana* wasn't named after the fruit, but after the West

African port of that name in the Cameroons. The first mate of the *Banana* died on that voyage. I got the berth. Then we took her to the Gulf of Mexico in ballast, and at Port Inglis we loaded with phosphate rock for Ireland.

That was one voyage when we nearly "lost the number of our mess," which is a deep-water way of saying "sunk with all hands lost."

Off Cape Hatteras we ran into a heavy northeast gale. Three gigantic seas swept the *Banana* fore and aft. They carried away our Number One derrick. It smashed into our Number One hatch and went clean through. The wreckage smashed aft and set our Number Two derrick adrift. The life-boats went over the side. Part of the bridge was torn away and went into the sea. Stanchions and davits were sheared off clean, the way a razor cuts whiskers. The whole ship was swept from bow to stern. We took in tons of water.

Luckily for us the wind moderated directly after. We crawled into Newport News six feet down by the head. Phosphate rock is porous and takes in water like a sponge. We had to pump out our forepeak and discharge some of the cargo before we could go on our way again.

That experience seemed to expend all our hard luck that voyage. We arrived at dear old dirty Dublin with-

out further incident. By this time I had put in the necessary twelve months as chief officer. Now I was able to go up for my master's ticket.

I took my master's examinations at Newport, Monmouthshire, near Cardiff—and old Captain Bentley was the examiner again. Again he passed me. And again he exploded and gave me one of the finest hauling over the coals I ever got.

"You damned young pup!" he roared. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, staying in steam. If you'd waited a day, I'd have put you in command of the finest sailing ship afloat. That's where you ought to be! I'm disgusted with you!"

It was on a Friday afternoon in Newport when I got my master's ticket. I waited until all the other boys came out of the examination room, about five o'clock. All together, we headed for a pub called the Prince of Wales Hotel just across the road. There we wet every ticket in the lot of us.

That party became historic in the British Mercantile Marine, because it never cost one of us officers a penny. And that is rare in a British pub. This is how it came about.

Several years before, when I was on the old *Hill Glen* she was manned by a Chinese crew. I had been ordered to escort about fifty of our Chinese ashore to the the-

ater, so they could have an evening's amusement. On the way back on board ship, after the show, I had taken them into the pub of this same Prince of Wales Hotel to give them a drink.

With the exception of the old chief steward and the boatswain, they were all dressed in Chinese clothes. I liked to pick up languages, and I had acquired some smattering of Chinese. I was giving them orders in Chinese and pidgin-English, both. Obviously I was in command of the party.

The owner of the Prince of Wales Hotel was an old chap named Evans. He came up to me and eyed me curiously.

"Would you shake hands with me, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, of course I will," I said, slightly surprised.

He shook hands with me very solemnly.

"I thank you, sir," he said. "This is the first time I have ever had the privilege of shaking hands with a Chinese officer."

I had been told that my eyes had the faintest touch of a slant, but this was the first time I had ever really realized it. And God knows there is no Chinese in my ancestry.

So this time, when I reentered the Prince of Wales pub, a master of the British Mercantile Marine, I walked up to old Evans.

"Will you shake hands with me, sir?" I asked.

He looked at me, somewhat puzzled. Clearly he didn't recognize me.

"Of course I will," he said.

We shook.

"This, sir," I told him, "is the *second* time you have had the privilege of shaking hands with a Chinese officer."

The crowd that came in with me, and to whom I had told the story before we entered, burst into a roar of laughter. Old Evans glared at me.

"You're no more Chinese than I am," he protested. "I don't see anything funny about this."

Then I told him the whole story.

None of us could pay for a drink at the Prince of Wales pub that night!

I was twenty-eight years old. I was a certificated master of any tonnage, any ocean, in steam and in sail.

Now I had something to show the folks at home—something they could understand. Something they would be proud to see.

Another Randell was a sea-captain.

CHAPTER VIII

DREDGING AND WEDDING-BELLS

I forsake the deep sea for a dredge on the West Coast of Africa—
Perversities of native servants.

I MIGHT have a master's ticket, but the first job I got with it was as second mate. I was given that berth on the *Adansi*, another Elder Dempster steamship. That was a great company. They owned more than two hundred and forty steamships then. You could start in the cargo steamers and work up to a berth on their great express liners. They had hundreds of mates with masters' tickets in their kits. The mates were all ready for promotion, and they got it fast with Elder Dempster. For in those days, with the majority of the Elder Dempster ships running to the West Coast of Africa, officers were dying off like flies. That West Coast of Africa was known as the White Man's Grave. Malarial fever, sleeping sickness, black-water fever and other tropical diseases were taking a heavy toll of the officers of the British Mercantile Marine. Promotions came as fast as in an army in battle, and for the same reason.

The *Adansi* headed out of Liverpool for the West Coast of Africa. We discharged cargo there and steamed for Demerara, British Guiana, just north of the Amazon River, where we loaded sugar for Montreal, Canada.

There I got my first taste of Elder Dempster promotions. In port at Montreal we found the Elder Dempster steamer *Montauk*. The captain had just died of some tropical disease he had picked up on the West Coast of Africa. The chief officer on the *Montauk* got his berth. I was shifted from second on the *Adansi* to chief officer on the *Montauk*.

We went down the St. Lawrence River to Father Point and Matane, and loaded with lumber for Buenos Aires. There we loaded "on the berth" and went back to London. And from London we were ordered to the West Coast of Africa again.

Back and forth across the world. That's the way it went.

As we headed south that time, I never dreamed the part the White Man's Grave was going to play in my life.

In those days when you said the "West Coast of Africa," you meant every port from Sierra Leone to St. Paul de Loanda. It was all open coast. There was not one single sheltered harbor. All there was, was open sand beach with a heavy, terrific, smashing surf rolling

in from the Atlantic, often reaching thirty feet in height. Every pound of cargo had to go over the side of a ship rolling heavily at anchor in that surf, and then had to be taken ashore in surf-boats.

We were thirty-five days, that voyage, at one place called Axim. There we had to discharge the first big gold dredger ever taken out to the Gold Coast. That was a ticklish job if ever there was one. The dredger had to be shipped in sections. Two sections of the main body of it covered our whole deck. They weighed thirty-five tons each. They had to be launched overside with the roll of the *Montauk* in the surf, and that was one of those jobs you measure by split seconds. We had to jack up each thirty-five-ton section, put skids under it, and then when the *Montauk* rolled shoreward, we had to shoot them clean over the rail. We had to do exactly that same trick with four corner pontoons weighing fourteen tons each, and with a boiler weighing twenty-five tons. Juggling anvils on a tight rope was light work compared to that job on a heavily rolling deck. If anything slipped, no man knew how many of us would be crushed flat as a pancake.

But we got the job done, and we headed for Forcados at the mouth of the Niger River.

I was ashore that first day at Forcados talking with some friends in the Southern Nigerian Marine.

"Why don't you come in with us?" one of them said. "You can get a berth as chief officer and relieving captain on one of the big government sand-pump dredgers."

I made some inquiries about the job. I learned I could have it if I wanted it, and the pay was twice what I was getting from Elder Dempster. The work was done on a basis of twelve months' duty on the West Coast and four months' leave, the leave starting on the date we arrived at Plymouth, England.

I took the job. All we had to do was keep the channel open into the port of Lagos. That was absolutely all! You had to see it to know what it meant.

We had to keep those dredgers at work on a bar that built up overnight, it seemed. We had to keep them working in a surf that rolled in between twenty and thirty feet high, with the whole sweep of the Atlantic Ocean behind it. Life down there was dangerous all the time, afloat or ashore. If you survived the job of keeping your dredger at work three or four miles offshore, anchored and tossed about by those giant combers that came roaring and curling in, the tropical diseases ashore usually got you. But the pay was fine and the work was exciting, and I was young.

I spent four months on the job as chief officer, and then the master of the dredger went home on leave and

left me in command. By the time he came back, the master of the other big new dredger, the *Sand Grouse*, went on leave, and I was sent in to take over his job. There was a magnificent piece of floating machinery, the *Sand Grouse*. She was five hundred and sixty feet long, over all, and equipped with twin screws.

Then at last came my turn for leave. I was looking forward to it. For I was going home to be married.

Miss Gertrude Lewis, of Cardiff, became Mrs. John Thomas Randell my first week back in England. She was the daughter of the chief inspector of the Cardiff police. I had met her when I was going up for my master's ticket.

We sailed for Newfoundland on our honeymoon. It wasn't until after we arrived at St. John's that my wife discovered that my tales about Newfoundland were fibs.

I had told her that in Newfoundland everybody lived on potatoes, salt pork and dried codfish!

I had met several British dowagers in my time, but two that I met then stand out in my memory. One was delightful, and one was perfectly poisonous.

Just before we sailed we had run up to London. There I was presented to one dear old titled lady.

"Captain Randell," she said one evening, "I've just learned that you and Mrs. Randell are going out to

Newfoundland on your honeymoon. I have a nephew in the colonies, too. Won't you please drop in and call on him, on your way out?"

"Of course," I said, assuming that he was probably in Montreal at the farthest. "Where is he?"

"In Cape Town," she said.

Britishers in those days talked a lot about the Empire. But they didn't seem to know such a lot about it.

The other dowager, the poisonous one, was a passenger on the same ship in which we sailed for Newfoundland. I had taken aboard one hamper of food for my own use. It was celery. I had contracted malarial fever on the West Coast of Africa, and a charming old lady I had met from Florida had told me celery would cure it. It cured me. But it brought on complications with the dowager, that voyage.

I had given the hamper to the chief steward. He placed a glass holding several stalks of celery in front of my plate, every meal. The poisonously dignified old dowager sat at the same table.

"Will you pass the celery, please?" she would demand, glaring at me. Meekly I would pass my private celery.

Three days out, she declared war. She went straight to the captain and reported the chief steward for showing me favoritism denied other passengers.

"Certainly I have paid as much for my passage as this Randell person," she said. "And unless this condition of favoritism is abolished, I shall be forced to report it to the Line."

"Madam," said the captain, "had you brought your own celery aboard, as did Captain Randell, you could have it with every meal."

She forgave neither of us while the voyage lasted. That glare of hers followed us every moment we were in her sight.

After a four-month honeymoon in Newfoundland we returned to England. I left Mrs. Randell in Wales, on the estate of old Lord Dunraven, who was a famous yachtsman. He was a challenger for the American Cup while Sir Thomas Lipton was still peddling tea.

I started back for my job at Lagos, a passenger on the Elder Dempster liner *Zungeru*. Before that trip was over I was to see a tragedy it makes me ill to remember, even yet.

The ports of West Africa from Sierra Leone down are still the same. Cargo is landed to-day as it was thirty or forty years ago, in surf-boats manned by Kroo-boys, who were marvelously expert swimmers and boatmen. The surf-boats are loaded at the ship's side, and are run through those huge combers up on the beach

and unloaded by these shining, black, naked giants. It is one of the sights for passengers who are making their first trip down that coast, to see some twenty of these surf-boats racing out from the beach to meet the incoming liners. They ride the surf like sea-gulls, with six to eight huge Kroo-boys paddling on either side, and one steering. Though the surf is bad enough, they have more than the surf to fight. They have to guard against tiger-sharks as well—the most ferocious man-eaters that swim.

I have heard recently that some scientist has said sharks won't eat human beings, and I've heard that some other chap has said sharks won't touch negroes. I wish these men had been aboard the *Zungeru* when we came to Accra, that voyage.

I was standing on deck, on the starboard quarter, leaning against the rail. A big surf-boat with a crew of Kroo-boys was racing out to meet us. Just as the *Zungeru* dropped anchor and went astern with her engines, that surf-boat reached our side and cut around the stern too closely, hauling up under our starboard quarter. The starboard propeller, going astern, chopped the surf-boat into matchwood. It killed all the Kroo-boys nearest to that side of the ship. The survivors jumped overboard.

Before I could count ten, the whole sea around us

was nothing but a mass of triangular black shark-fins, legs and arms and bodies, all mingled in water stained with blood. In less than two minutes nothing floated. Those sharks had pulled down and eaten the living, the dying, and the fragments of the dead.

Back on the job I went at Lagos. There was plenty of work, but men can't work all the time. And in the hours off the job we were hard put to it for amusement. The old Mohammedan chiefs who lived ashore were a godsend to us.

They were tall, stately, dignified old boys, bronze in color, with lean faces and aquiline noses. They dressed in the burnous and turban. They were of the Fulani tribe of the Gold Coast and of the Yoruba tribe of the western delta of the Niger. They had more than a third Arab blood in them.

They kept coming aboard the dredgers all the time. We always knew the reason for their visits. It was the hope that we would give them a few, good, stiff drinks out of a bottle of "square-face"—the trade gin of the tropics. It was against the Mohammedan religion to drink ardent spirits. We knew that, and they knew we knew it. But they explained it to us, cleverly as lawyers. While their religion forbade drinking, it was a law made ashore for Mohammedans ashore, and the law said nothing about drinking while afloat! Gin was gin

to them. The stronger it was, the more it would bite, the hotter fire it built in your stomach, the better they loved it.

We played endless childish little tricks on them. A favorite was to connect a tin wash basin with an electric wire, fill the basin with water, put a silver two-shilling piece in the water, and invite them to help themselves to the coin. The moment their fingers touched the water, we'd switch on current. They'd yell like fiends and jump sky-high. But after they found out it was quite harmless and they weren't really injured, they would roar with laughter at the trick that had been played on themselves. They would go ashore still laughing and bring back their friends, other dignified old Mohammedan chiefs, and themselves stage the show. They got a bigger kick out of seeing their friends get a shock than we did in the first place.

One night, just as I was taking my usual ten grains of quinine, a group of Mohammedan chiefs came aboard the *Sand Grouse*. The bitter tablets were heavily sugar-coated. We swallowed them and chased them down with gin and Angostura bitters. One of the chiefs watched me take mine.

"Him good?" he asked.

"Good!" I said. "You wantum?"

"Me wantum!" he said eagerly.

I took out six big tablets, thirty grains of quinine in them, and handed them to him. He popped the lot into his mouth and started sucking on them.

"Him sweet?" I asked.

"Ya. Him sweet past fish, Massa," he said with a grin. Fish was their standard of comparison.

"Chewum," I told him.

He started to chew. The quinine came through the sugar. The smile vanished from his face. Astonishment took its place. Then I could see a look of fear come over it. His jaw literally dropped.

"I die! I die!" he began to howl.

But an hour later, he was trying to coax another chief to chew the same dose.

The Fulani women were really beautiful. And you had to fight them off. It was nothing at all in those days for an old Fulani chief for whom you had done a favor, to bring you in return, as a gift, one of his beautiful daughters, thirteen or fourteen years old. We were forced to refuse them. For if you took them there were all sorts of local marriage ceremonies, they took your name, and they had to remain your official wife while you stayed there. If you tried to get rid of them, you had a tribe of warriors on your neck.

Slavery meant nothing to them. I had an old Bassa chief as head man when I joined the Southern Nigerian

Marine. He had a twelve-year-old son. He came to me quite gravely one day and offered to sell me the boy for two cases of trade gin. I wasn't investing in any personal slaves just then. So I told him I'd take the boy for a personal servant, but only as a gift. We did all our talking with the natives in pidgin-English. In that strange language "dash" means "give."

"All right, Massa. Me dashum you," he said. And he sent his son out to the dredger with the message that he was my man.

The boy came aboard naked as a shelled shrimp. I christened him Juan. I taught him to clean my white shoes and bring my tea. He went about his duties stark naked. But I noticed he eyed our clothes enviously.

Then one afternoon when I was resting, he knocked on the door of my room with my tea.

"Come in," I called. I didn't recognize the vision that came through the door.

"Massa, you likeum clothes?" the vision asked. Then I saw it was Juan.

Somewhere he had got hold of a big man's pair of red balbriggan fleece-lined drawers. The waist-band came under his armpits. The legs were rolled to his knees. Around his neck all by itself was a white starched collar ten sizes too big for him, and a red tie. On his head was a dented black bowler hat.

For an hour I couldn't drink my tea for laughter.

There were seven of us, white men, on the *Sand Grouse*. I was elected mess president. That meant that mine was the responsibility for the cook and our two meals a day. We had breakfast at eleven o'clock in the morning and dinner at seven o'clock at night. The steak was always tough. It was from native cattle, butchered ashore fresh every day. It was like a combination of rubber and leather when you tried to broil or fry it. So I got a meat grinder and made the native cook serve it as Hamburger steak. That seemed to be a splendid solution of the problem.

But one day the Hamburger came on very tough and lumpy. I called in Tom, the Number One steward, and exploded in pidgin-English.

"Tom," I demanded, "wassa matta dat dam' cook? He no savvy makeum those meat plover? He no fit?"

Tom was apologetic.

"Them machiney done bloke," he explained. "No can cut littla."

"Next time happen, Tom," I told him, "you getum hell, cook getum plenty hell."

Tom retired, scared and promising reform. Dinner next day brought Hamburger steak again. This time it came on in very fine pieces, smooth and easy to eat. The old chief engineer was a fat man, and he dearly loved

his food. He gorged on that Hamburger steak. He praised it when I came in late and sat down to the table. I turned to Tom.

"Tom, wassa matta dat cook no fit makeum like this all time?" I asked.

"He fit now, Mass! He fit!" said Tom happily.

"How he makeum good like this, this time?" I asked, expecting to hear that the meat grinder had been repaired.

"He done chewum, sar!" chuckled Tom.

That damned nigger cook had chewed up every piece of meat that went into the Hamburger steak!

The chief engineer's chair bounced one way and the table shunted another way, as he leaped to his feet. He dived for the window like a seasick passenger—and seasick he was. And the next thing I saw was the engineer rushing forward with a spanner in his hand, and the cook, two jumps ahead of him, diving over the rail. Just then that cook preferred sharks to the chief engineer.

And all the time between episodes such as these we dredged away at the Lagos Bar with that terrific surf smashing in. It got us where we dreamed about it. The threat of it hung over us all the time. The thunder of it dinned in our ears all the time. Twenty-two ships had gone aground on Lagos Bar, and not one had ever been salvaged. The surf pounded steel hulls into a twisted

mass of wreckage against the sand. Men called that Bar the "Graveyard."

We had a patent life-boat at Lagos. It was twin-screw, driven by steam, and made of steel with watertight air compartments. It was unsinkable. It was used to carry government passengers and mail between the liners and the shore.

Three trips, one after the other, that surf caught it, rolled it clean over, and drowned ten persons.

Then the *Sand Grouse*, working at her anchorage one day, was picked up bodily by those giant combers. They tore her anchor loose and slammed her on Lagos Bar.

She had cost two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, which in those days was the equivalent of a million pounds sterling to-day. It looked like a complete disaster.

Ten days the *Sand Grouse* hammered on the bar, hurled back and forth by the surf. But she was stuck tight as far as getting her off was concerned. Atlantic swells twenty feet high smashed over her at times like a partly submerged rock.

I was down at Forcados when it happened. They sent for me. I went out and sized up the job. It looked to me as though I could get her clear.

"What are your plans?" asked Captain Percival Jones,

Deputy Director of Marine for the Southern Nigerian Government.

"Dredge her out with my own dredger," I told him.

"You'll do nothing but get your own dredge ashore, too," he protested.

We had quite an argument, but at last I convinced him.

"It looks like the only chance we have," he said to me.

"Do I get a free hand?" I asked.

He gave it to me.

I organized day shifts and night shifts on my dredger, and tackled the job. We worked twenty-one days and nights without let-up. I got a little sleep now and then, but very little. But I managed to dredge a channel straight into the place where the *Sand Grouse* was stuck. And at last I towed her out safely.

I had lost three anchors complete with chains, and I had torn a windlass out of my own dredger by the roots before I finished. But I got her out. The *Sand Grouse* was the first craft ever salvaged off Lagos Bar.

I towed her one hundred and eighty miles down the coast to Forcados. There I put her in dry-dock, cleaned her out, and put a three-inch concrete bottom in her. But a thorough inspection showed me there was nothing to it. She couldn't work in that shape. She had to be

taken back to Renfrew, Scotland, where she was built. She would have to have a new bottom and a lot of her frames straightened before she would be any good again.

I talked it over with old P. J., as we called Captain Percival Jones. He decided to give her to me to take back under her own steam.

"With the governor's sanction, we'll give you two hundred pounds sterling for salvaging the *Sand Grouse*, taking her to Renfrew for repairs, and bringing her back to Lagos from Scotland," said old P. J.

That was a fair offer, even for a job like that, in those days and under those conditions.

"I'll do it," I said.

CHAPTER IX

FREE LANCE

Various adventures about the world as a sea-captain and salvage engineer.

WITH my crew of Kroo-boys and Jackri-boys I took the *Sand Grouse* from Forcados up to Las Palmas in the Grand Canaries. There she had to be inspected and passed by J. J. Johnston-Burne of the London Salvage Association and by the Lloyd's Surveyors before she could proceed on the voyage for Scotland.

They took one look at her and flatly refused to O. K. the voyage.

"The minute you hit the heavy weather in the Bay of Biscay," they told me, "that concrete bottom will crack with the strain. It will open up like a door and you'll go to the bottom like a stone."

I knew they were wrong. I knew she'd stand it.

But they held the whip-hand. I couldn't take her out without their approval. There was only one recourse I could see. I had to fall back on West Coast hospitality. I gave a party aboard the *Sand Grouse* at Las Palmas,

and I got them all so drunk that they ceased to protest and admitted I knew what I was talking about. They signed the release before they went ashore that night. And once I had their signatures on that paper, I could tell them to go to hell, no matter how much they wanted to reconsider when they got sober next morning.

There were the signatures. I got ready to steam out. And then I found I had a mutiny on my hands.

The Kroo-boys came up to me in a body as I was giving some orders.

"No can do, Massa," they protested. "No can go dis England. We fear dem Black Water."

The "Black Water" was their name for the Atlantic Ocean.

I knew that mutiny was all due to one ringleader among the Kroo-boys. And knowing Kroo-boys by now, I knew it was no time to be sweetly reasonable with them, or try any of this moral suasion stuff. I went below. When I came back on deck, I was carrying a sjambok in my right hand. It is the heavy, long, rhinoceros-hide whip of South Africa. You pronounce it "shambock." It is bad business in any language.

"Take your choice," I told the Kroo-boys. "You come to England for me or you jump overboard in Las Palmas harbor for this."

I started toward them, cracking the sjambok. They

jumped overboard, all right. But they jumped into the hopper of the dredger to get away from the sjambok.

"We come, Massa! We come!" they shouted.

I took them all, except the ringleader. I ran him ashore to be shipped back to Lagos.

The *Sand Grouse* started out to sea. We stuck our nose into heavy weather from the start. By the time we got off Cape Finisterre, we were fighting a gale.

And then that damned concrete bottom began to crack from the strain as the *Sand Grouse* pitched and tossed and rolled!

The carpenter came up on the bridge from below to report that we had four feet of water in the hold—and it was rising fast.

I ordered the pumps started. They didn't suck a quart. I made a hasty inspection. Nothing in sight was wrong, but still the pumps wouldn't suck. Then it dawned on me what was the matter. Something was wrong that wasn't in sight. That time we put the concrete bottom in her at Forcados, there had been a lot of loose planking, barrel staves, and that sort of thing left in her hold. Sloshing around in the bilge water, that stuff had pulped. It was that pulp which was choking the rose-box—the square steel box with half-inch holes covering top and sides that drew the water when the pumps started.

The *Sand Grouse* was pitching and rolling like a cork. Big waves were washing clean over her. The water in the hold was gaining every minute. If we couldn't get that rose-box cleared, we were due for a fast trip straight down.

I called the Jackri-boys in the crew. I told them that our only chance was for them to get down into the hold and clear that pulp out of the rose-box grating. But they balked.

"Massa, we fear dem Black Water!" they wailed.

"You tellum me you come for England!" I roared at them. "You tellum you no fear Black Water! You go bottom-side if dat job you no fit a doum!"

I guess it was pride that swayed them in the end. Nothing I could threaten was as bad as the death at sea that seemed to be only a matter of an hour or so. But whatever stirred them, they went below. I went with them. By the time we got down into the hold, there was eight feet of water sloshing around. It wasn't sloshing gently, either. Great black waves of it raced fore and aft as the *Sand Grouse* pitched; raced from starboard to port and back again as she rolled. And in it were fragments of débris that could smash and tear when they hit you. It was a terrifying job those Jackri-boys faced. They went to it like men.

They stripped off the rough heavy togs I had given

them for the voyage. Big and black and naked, they dived into that wash of water, drove their way down to the bottom, clawed at the choked rose-box as long as they could hold their breaths, and then came gasping to the surface while others dived in their place. It was magnificent! If ever a man saw courage conquer terror, I did that day. And at last the pumps began to suck.

For two hours it was touch and go. We didn't gain an inch—but the water didn't gain an inch on us, either. And then inch by inch, we began to gain on the water. It was a hell of a fight all that morning. But at last we got her clear.

We brought her into Liverpool—and man, was I glad when I stepped on the dock! There I was in England with the first big craft ever salved off Lagos Bar, and salved after she had pounded on that bar thirty-one days. I had salved her. And I had brought her home.

There was further inspection at Liverpool. While that was going on I learned from a skipper of the Elder Dempster Line that he had brought Johnston-Burne of the London Salvage Association back to England through the same weather we had fought in the *Sand Grouse*. The skipper told me Johnston-Burne was a crazy man all through the voyage. He neither ate nor slept. Over and over again as long as he had listeners, he kept telling how my death and the death of my crew

was on his head for getting drunk at Las Palmas and signing that release.

From Liverpool I took the *Sand Grouse* around to Glasgow without any incident at all. In Glasgow I found a water-front boarding-house that would take in my black crew, and that first day I paid them off a month's wages. Next morning six coal-black African firemen came down to work in the clothes they had bought with that money. They were a sight! Every one of them was wearing a long black frock coat and a tall silk hat. They all had bright yellow shoes and lemon yellow kid gloves. Around those black necks were high, white, starched, standing collars, ringed with neckties of every color of the rainbow!

At last the *Sand Grouse* was repaired and put in perfect shape. I took her back to Lagos under her own steam without any trouble at all. Lloyd's was more than pleased. The big dredger had been insured at the highest rate ever given in marine insurance up to that time—thirteen and a half guineas per cent. from Las Palmas to Liverpool. That meant the British Government paid thirteen and a half guineas for every hundred guineas of insurance. If she had sunk, Lloyd's would have been out a quarter of a million pounds sterling. My Jackri-boys and I had saved them that.

I went around to old P. J. to collect. He welched.

"I'm sorry, Captain Randell," he said, "but you'll recall I said we'd pay you that two hundred pounds 'with the governor's sanction.' The governor wouldn't sanction the bonus. It'll have to be all in the day's work."

I went out of that interview with the loss of that two hundred pounds after such a job as I had done sticking in my crop. A week later I went home on my regular four months' leave. The lost two hundred pounds continued to stick in my crop. If that was what government service meant, I was through with government service for a while. I made up my mind I might make a go of it if I started in as a free-lance marine surveyor, ship-broker, dredger specialist and that sort of thing. So I resigned.

The minute Lloyd's learned of my resignation, they made me a handsome present. They couldn't have done it had I continued in government service, on account of the drastic British Bribery Act. You can't give a British official a box of cigars without risking penal servitude for both of you, if it is found out, under that law.

But I was no longer a government official, and they certainly could afford that present out of the quarter of a million pounds sterling I had saved them that day in the Bay of Biscay, and salving the *Sand Grouse* off Lagos Bar.

My first job as a free-lance got me tangled up in one

of the finest fights and riots that ever called for the police reserves. Also it nearly got me murdered.

A fire had started in the hold of the Spanish passenger ship *Isla de Luzon* while she was in the harbor at Messina, Italy. They had to scuttle her there to put it out. A Scotch firm took a chance and bought her as she lay on the bottom completely under water. They raised her and had her taken into Barcelona. Those Scotch owners wanted Lloyd's to insure her before they took her from Barcelona up to the Firth of Forth for complete overhaul. Lloyd's refused to insure her unless they could name the captain for that voyage. They named me.

A member of that Scotch firm came around to my hotel and offered me fifty pounds sterling and expenses to bring her back.

"Not a chance," I told him.

"I can get twenty captains for less," he said.

"Get 'em," I advised him.

He left. A day later he was back.

"Lloyd's insist on you," he said. "Will you bring her in?"

"I will," I told him, "for one hundred pounds sterling."

Being Scotch, he nearly fainted. But presently he rallied and gave me the job. I picked up a crew of fifty-six men around Shields and took them across the Channel

as passengers, then down through France to Barcelona by rail, and put them aboard the *Isla de Luzon*. I had business ashore, so I left them aboard ship that night while I slept at a hotel in Barcelona.

Under the French and Spanish law, the men of a ship's crew are entitled to one full liter of wine a day. The wine for the former crew of the *Isla de Luzon*, one hundred cases of *vin rouge*, was still in the ship. Shortly after dark my crew broke into the hatch, broke out the wine and started to fill up on it. During the time it had been submerged, salt sea-water had penetrated the corks. That salty wine did more than make the crew drunk. It drove them crazy. Before midnight the worst battle Barcelona ever saw was in full swing on the *Isla de Luzon's* decks. Some city official called on me at the hotel and demanded that I stop it. I got a squad of Spanish gendarmes and we went out in small boats and boarded the ship.

Men were fighting like maniacs all over her, with knives and clubs from broken furniture, as well as with their fists, when we climbed aboard. Argue with them? You might as well try to kiss a rattlesnake calm.

I had hardly got both feet on the deck when a big husky rushed at me with a knife. I sidestepped and caught him on the point of the jaw. Just as he dropped, another husky with the leg of a table held like a base-

ball bat swung at me and hit me on the shoulder. He got in a couple more nasty clouts before I could drop him. But by then I was mad, too. I waded in alongside the gendarmes. Before we got through we had stretched twenty of the maniacs cold on the deck. I don't know yet how we were lucky enough not to have killed any of them; how we were lucky enough not to have any dead of our own. But we quelled the riot. It was a sick-looking crew I mustered that morning. They looked sicker when I made them heave that salty wine all over the side. But they settled down to business, then, and we brought the old wreck safely into the Firth of Forth.

To be Irish, my next big job was a small one. I was commissioned to take the dredger *Pungue* from Glasgow around the Cape of Good Hope to Beira in Portuguese East Africa. That was the damndest voyage I ever made in my life. The *Pungue* was the craziest thing that ever crossed the Bay of Biscay. From a sailor's point of view she was one of the most interesting craft that ever steamed out of the British Isles on a long voyage.

She was a small combination sand-pump, hopper, bucket dredger. She was only a hundred and forty feet long and twenty-three feet beam, and she had just six inches free-board when we sailed. Her molded depth was only eight feet. Six knots was the best she could do in smooth water on her trial trip. Her bridge was over

thirty feet high. Her bucket tumbler and two driving-wheels weighed over forty tons. Her bucket ladder and buckets weighed over an aggregate of eighty tons. Her super-structure; combined with that machinery, gave her an aggregate of over one hundred and sixty tons above her main deck. A duck pond was the place for her.

We trudged out of Glasgow and down into the Bay of Biscay. There we struck as nasty a southwester as I ever want to see. For twenty-four hours it kept us just holding our own. Thirty-foot waves smashed clean over us. The little craft was like a partly submerged rock. But we weathered it.

We crawled along down the West Coast of Africa and reached Cape Town at last. But our troubles were not nearly over. From Cape Town to Durban is a long run without a coaling station for a vessel that only made six knots in smooth water on her trial trip.

When we reached Durban we had less than half a ton of sweepings in the bunkers. At every port where we called for bunker coal, we had to bag all we could when the bunkers were full, and put the bagged coal down into the water in the hoppers. Then when our bunkers went down, we'd start fishing the bags of coal up out of the hoppers.

That was a slow old scow. One morning, off the East Coast of Africa, I went on the bridge just after day-

break. I gave a look at the coast-line. I discovered to my astonishment that we were bobbing up and down about two miles off the same spot we were abreast of the night before, at sunset.

An old Scotch sailor was at the wheel.

"What time is this rotten weather going to stop, Sandy?" I asked him.

"I don't know, sir," he said. "It certainly is tough luck, sir. We're not even getting a change of scenery for our money!"

Neither were we. Head winds and a heavy sea held us almost as though we were anchored.

But we reached Beira on the fifty-sixth day out of Glasgow, and I had made three hundred and fifty pounds sterling profit above my expenses in less than two months.

I finished up my business ashore, and took a vacation, lion hunting, up the Pungue River. It was my first lion hunt. And it was just like the stories I had read about it as a boy.

Fifty miles up the Pungue River, you are in the wildest part of Africa. All about you are jungles and forests and savage tribes. I plunged into it all, eager to try out a gun I owned that I had never had a chance to use. It was one of the finest double-barreled .56 Express elephant guns ever made. I had bought it from an old ele-

phant hunter I had found in Cape Town, dead broke.

Out there in that wilderness, we built a platform up in a tree. We shot a buck and staked out the carcass in a clearing we made below the platform. At nightfall we climbed up to the platform with guns, ammunition, cold food and water bottles, and lay down to wait for the lion. Swarms of stinging mosquitoes began to feed on us by night, as swarms of biting flies had fed on us that day.

Then I heard the terrifying, coughing roar of the lion—and there he was standing over the dead buck in the moonlight.

I sighted just behind his shoulder and gave him both barrels, one after the other.

I reloaded as fast as I could. There was no need. The lion was dead. Those two bullets had torn his heart into shreds.

Later on that same hunt I got an old hippo and a baby hippo as well. But the lion has it all over the hippo for thrills.

I had discovered that there were some great points to this free-lance game. You had your tough times and your hard work, and you had to take plenty of risks. But once your job was done there was time for play, like this big game hunt, and you came home like a duke on the best express liner in reach.

I took a Bullard and King Line ship from Beira to Durban. There I took passage on the Blue Funnel Line steamer *Ascanius*, to London. She was one of the new liners on the Australia to London run, a magnificent ship with luxurious quarters. I had a splendid time.

On that ship I met a young Englishman named Albrecht who was going home. After our first party aboard, they put us in two rooms next to the smoking-room on the saloon deck. They must have known there would be some more wild parties and wanted to keep the noise away from the ladies' quarters, I fancy. They used splendid judgment.

Our cabin steward, Rafferty, had been a British vice-consul somewhere out Java way. Naturally I never asked the details. But now he was out of the consular service, down and out, and working his passage home. He had been a man of some means, once, too. And he was the best valet I ever had. It takes a man who has had his own valet to be a good one.

I can remember yet how perfectly Albrecht's and my evening clothes were laid out just before dinner, nightly. And I can still hear: "Rafferty! Rafferty! Cocktails for two!" from Albrecht, and Rafferty's voice: "Coming, sir!"

That voyage became almost as memorable as the time

the Chosen Few came home from Cape Town after the Boer War.

It even developed a real romance. We reached Las Palmas in the Grand Canaries at last. Albrecht and I were leaning against the rail, watching some passengers come out in the tender. Two of them were ladies. As they climbed up from the tender to the liner's deck, Albrecht leaned over and whispered in my ear.

"My God, that one in the lead is the most beautiful girl I ever saw in my life! I'd give anything to meet her!"

"Then give it to me," I laughed. I had recognized the other lady as an old friend. A minute later Albrecht had been presented to the girl.

Long after, while I was with the British Grand Fleet in the World War, I got a letter from Albrecht. The date showed it had been written and posted twelve months before it reached me. It was an invitation to Albrecht's wedding with that same girl.

I wired him: "One year too late for the wedding. Am I in time for the christening?"

I wasn't. But the next time I got leave, I visited Albrecht and his bride.

It was in the middle of the World War. That bride, to whom I had presented him, had brought Albrecht an income of fifty thousand pounds a year. They lived in

magnificent state, on a beautiful country estate in England. The establishment was complete, even to the Rolls-Royce.

But the hell of it for Albrecht was that the war-time petrol regulations were on, and though he had the Rolls-Royce he couldn't get the gasoline to run it. He had just enough petrol on the place to run the car to the nearest filling station. I was in my navy uniform.

"Drive me over there," I told him.

We got aboard and drove over. The navy uniform and my bluff about "official business" got him a tankful. Sometimes the poor can be useful to the rich, no end!

But back to the free-lance days. Trip followed trip. Long voyages and short voyages, big ships and little ships and dredgers, storms and sunshine. But never a wreck.

But I came very close to a wreck once on the Andaman Islands in a cyclone in the Bay of Bengal. I was taking the reclamation suction dredger *Campbell* from Glasgow to Rangoon, for the Harbor Board of Rangoon in Burmah. She was as crazy in her own way as the *Pungue* that I had taken out to Beira. The *Campbell* was about five hundred and sixty feet long, with fifty-six-foot beam, twin screws and no draft at all. She sat on top of the water like a canoe. Five knots in still wa-

ter was her best speed. She was more unwieldy than a garbage scow. She even had two decks above the main deck. She just squatted on the surface of the ocean, drawing about four feet six inches of water, and squattered along like a bloated duck.

And just off the Andaman Islands in a craft like that, the barometer suddenly dropped like an elevator going down. Then we saw the cyclone heading straight for us. That was one time in my life I thought I was gone. If that cyclone had hit us squarely, it would either have sunk us or smashed us into kindling against the Andaman Islands. We didn't have a ghost of a show to get out of its way. We didn't have the build to weather it if it hit us. And there it was bearing straight down upon us.

But by some miracle the cyclone veered to the eastward and the heaviest force of it missed us.

We had a rough time with the skirts of it, at that.

CHAPTER X

RUSSIAN LIQUOR AND A GERMAN SPY

I accept a commission from the Russian Government and help defeat a German spy—I become a British naval officer.

IT WAS toward the end of 1912. I was still a free-lance, getting very profitable preferential treatment from William Simons & Company, Limited, of Renfrew, Scotland. They were the oldest ship and dredger builders in Scotland. Between cruises I was living in Garelochhead. Mrs. Randell, our young son and I had a lovely home there. If I had been offered the traditional two guesses about my future, the last two would have been that I was going to have a boss, and he was going to be the Czar of Russia.

Yet that is exactly what happened. I ran down to Glasgow on business one day, and one of the officials of the Simons company presented me to a high commission of Russian naval officers and engineers. They had come over to Scotland to sign contracts for dredgers to be used in establishing the new Russian Naval Base at Reval in Esthonia, on the south side of the Gulf of Finland, which opens out into the Baltic Sea. Some of the

Russians spoke English. All of them spoke French. I got along with them splendidly that day, and was invited to luncheon with them. At that luncheon began the negotiations which ended in my receiving, a few months later, the commission to take out to Reval the first new craft of their dredger fleet.

The Czar certainly did have a fleet of dredgers before he got through. There were sixteen or seventeen of them, suction dredgers, bucket dredgers and steam-hopper dredgers. They were the best that money could buy. I took out half a dozen of them from Renfrew to Reval, and after each delivery I stayed five or six weeks at Reval.

Then the Russian Government signed me up to supervise all the dredging work at the new Naval Base. The job meant better than ten thousand dollars a year. We were then expecting our second child, so I left Mrs. Randell and our boy back at Garelochhead and went out to Russia.

It was familiar work at Reval. And it was easy work after those years of dredging in a forty-foot surf at Lagos on the West Coast of Africa. It wasn't the work that made that job hard. It was the play. Keeping up to those parties the Russians gave was the hardest job in the world.

Life in Russia was geared to high speed in those days.

Knocking around the world, I had heard a lot about the luxury and revelry of Russian official life. I discovered that if anything the story had been too conservative.

Rich Russians had always been pictured to me as swimming in champagne. But I soon found that the drinking they did made a steady diet of champagne look like total abstinence. They only drank champagne as one of the minor beverages with their meals. Vodka far outranked it in both strength and quantity. And after dinner they started in on coffee and cognac, ladies and gentlemen alike, and they would keep it up until sunrise.

They were delightful people. They all spoke German or French in addition to their Russian, and I got along with them magnificently. The one fault I could find with them was that they never knew when a party was over. Morning after morning at Reval it was the usual thing to see four or five automobiles loaded with Russian Navy and Army officers and engineers and ladies, come rolling in at daybreak after a night of drinking coffee and cognac until you would think it would start running out of their ears.

Those parties were so frequent and so hectic that I had to hide out three or four nights a week to catch up on sleep. I thought I had seen something in Scotland, and in the seaports all over the world, of men who could

hold their liquor; of men you could really call hard drinkers. But Russia made me revise all my estimates. Their heads were harder than any heads in the world. Their stomachs had the thickest copper lining in history. I met men at Reval who would ruin any Scot I ever saw who prided himself on his drinking capacity, and then go on to the next party. I have seen them drink ten glasses of undiluted vodka with their meal—a mouthful of meat followed by a swallow of vodka—and then they'd start on champagne before they went into the interminable round of coffee and cognac.

Those Russian dinners were marvelous endurance tests.

They started with cocktails. These were followed by the hors-d'œuvres that the Russians call "*zakuski*." They are platters of cold meats and pickled fish and caviar and cold roast goose. Each is a meal in itself. And with the *zakuski* is served the vodka that makes liqueur Scotch seem like milk in comparison.

But that was only the start. The fish course came next, and more vodka came with that. Then came the roast, and with it still more vodka, followed by champagne. Curiously, they followed the joint with the soup course, and they served more champagne with that. Then after the soup came the sweets and the savories—I rarely saw salads at a Russian dinner—and more champagne.

After that it was coffee and cognac until daybreak.

It was a wonderful life for a man with a good digestion and a hard head.

In the autumn of 1913 while I was at Reval, my second son, Edwin Randell, was born. The news reached me by cable, in a code word that meant: "It's a boy. Mother and child doing well." I decoded it and showed it to Captain Mai, one of the Russian staff captains, extracting a promise from him not to say a word about it.

We gathered at the officers' mess that night for dinner. As usual, we drank in champagne the toast to the health of his Majesty, the Czar. After that we drank, also in champagne, the toast to the health of his Majesty, King George V, of England. The Russians had done that every night since I had started dining with them.

Then, much to my surprise, the old Russian admiral at the head of the table rose to his feet and held his glass aloft.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we have drunk to the health of the Czar of Russia. We have drunk to the health of the King of England. Now I ask you to rise and drink to the health of Captain Randell's young son, born yesterday. May he live to grow up as good a man and as real a man as his father!"

I sat there almost stunned as they rose with a cheer. They drank the toast standing. I had to rise and reply to

it. I don't know yet what I said. But then they drank that toast again and again, standing with one foot in their chairs, and one foot on the table.

And after each toast, they hurled the wine glasses to the floor, smashing them in the good, ancient Scotch fashion as the toast ended. The show stopped when there wasn't a whole glass left in the officers' mess ashore, or on a single ship at the base.

It cost me a great many hundred rubles to replace them. The memory is worth it.

Next day, from every man there, I received a gift for my son. There was a trunk full of silver—cups and spoons and porringers and loving-cups. But one of the most valued of the gifts was a tri-centenary Russian ruble given by the Czar to the admiral a few days before, on the Czar's visit to Reval for the celebration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the day Peter the Great took Reval from the Swedes.

Colonel Dobrovolsky also gave me one of these historic rubles for the boy. Less than a week later I was able to buy a third coin for two rubles. The man from whom I bought it offered me twenty rubles for it that same afternoon.

There were very few of these coins struck off, and all of them were given by the Czar, personally, only to high Russian officials in Esthonia. They are probably the

rarest modern coins in the world to-day. I think I am safe in saying that I am the only man in the world who has three of them.

I was still on the job at Reval when the news reached us that the Archduke Ferdinand had been assassinated at Sarajevo. The effect this news had on the Russian officers was plainly evident. They talked endlessly about it. They seemed to sense instantly the deep significance of it.

A few days later the old Russian admiral came to me.

"Old friend," he said, "you had better start for home. Russia will be at war with Germany in a few days. All Europe will be at war soon. If I am not mistaken, all the world will be at war."

There was a prophet! I started to pack that day.

A little later in the day he came to me, troubled.

"There is a somewhat delicate mission you can perform for Russia, if you will, Captain Randell," he said. "A Finnish passenger boat leaves for Germany to-morrow. As yet, you can go home that way as well as any other. On board that boat will be a man we believe to be a German spy with plans of this Russian Naval Base and with other papers containing Russian military information for the German High Command. We can not commit an overt act yet. But those papers must never reach the German Grand Staff. Any Russian who ap-

proaches that German will be suspected by him. But you, as an Englishman, can meet him without suspicion on his part. On board the boat will be a Polish lady who will identify herself to you. She will present you to the German. Don't let those papers get ashore in that German officer's possession. We leave the details to you."

That was a nice job to have laid in your lap. But I had to take it on for the old boy.

Next afternoon we sailed. We were to arrive at Swinemünde next morning. Whatever I was going to do had to be done quickly. We were hardly away from the pier when the little Polish lady came up and identified herself to me. Inside half an hour, quite casually, we had encountered the German and she had presented me.

"Let's have a drink," I proposed.

"With pleasure," he said in perfect English.

We had several cocktails. The dinner hour approached.

"It would be a pleasure to have you take dinner with me," I invited.

"Gladly," said the German.

Now that I saw he would be sociable and would drink, my plan was perfectly clear. It was simple. I was well supplied with Russian rubles, and my head

was well-fortified after all that Russian drinking at Reval. I started out to drink the German under the table. Once I succeeded in that, I would go through his clothes and his baggage.

I kept three dining-room stewards busy icing and serving the champagne throughout dinner. The old "bubbly" was certainly flowing that night. After dinner, with coffee and brandy at the end, we strolled on deck for a while.

"Let's have another drink," I invited. We headed for the smoking-room. And I'm damned if that German didn't proceed to pour beer on top of all that champagne and all those cocktails. He stood up under it, too! I had run up against a real drinking man. I held to whisky and soda, and drank with him, drink for drink. We grew quite friendly.

It was eleven o'clock that night when he began to talk about the coming war.

"I have met many Englishmen," he said, "but none like you. If they were all like you, *Der Tag* wouldn't mean so much to us Germans. But they are not. My friend, your country and mine are going to be at war soon. If it were peace, I would want you to visit my home in Germany. But if we meet in war, it will be no quarter."

"Fine," I told him. "Let's drink to it."

I ordered another whisky and soda. He started to order beer again. Then he changed his mind.

"Beer is a mild drink," he said. "It is a peaceable drink. That is why we Germans like it. But if the need comes, we Germans can outdrink you English as well as we can outfight you. Steward, I take the Englishman's drink." And he started on whisky and soda.

The bar closed at two o'clock in the morning. We were the last to leave. We toddled below, arm in arm.

"It's a pity," said the German, "to go to bed without another drink."

"I can fix that," I told him. "I have three bottles of Martell's cognac in my kit bag. I'll get it."

I got it and came back. We sat in his stateroom drinking cognac until dawn. I thanked my Lord for the drinking training I had been going through in Russia. But at that I was beginning to feel myself slip.

At last the German said: "I must get the express to Berlin when we land. Will you call me?"

"I'm going home by way of the Hook of Holland," I said. "I've got to catch a train too. I'll call you."

I went to my stateroom and stripped. Slipping on a bathrobe I went down the corridor to the bath and took an icy cold shower. Then I went back to the German's room. He was stretched out in his berth, both eyes shut tight. I shook him by the shoulder.

"Let's have one last nightcap," I proposed.

He opened one eye.

"*Mein Gott!*" he muttered. "*Ich bin ganz tot!*" (My God! I am wholly dead!)

Then he lay there with both eyes shut as if he had told the truth. I shook him a few times. He never moved. He didn't even blink.

When I made sure he had passed out completely, I searched his baggage. Then I found what I was looking for, beneath a false bottom in his kit bag.

There in my hands I held the complete plans of the Naval Base at Reval, and a mass of other important-looking papers in some code. I tied the strings of my pajama trousers outside my pajama coat, and stuffed all the papers inside the breast of the coat. Then I gathered my bathrobe around me, stepped out into the corridor, closed the door behind me, and left my German friend dead to the world.

Back in my own room I rang for the room steward.

"The German gentleman with whom I have been drinking does not wish to be wakened in the morning," I told the steward. "Be sure you do not disturb him."

The steward promised he wouldn't. He departed with the biggest tip he ever got.

I was one of the first ashore at Swinemünde. I caught the train for Hamburg. There was a boat ready

to sail for Scotland. I went aboard, and the moment I got into my room I changed my clothes for a suit of totally different pattern and put on a cap instead of a hat, in case there might be a search if the German had come to life and telegraphed ahead. But nothing happened. The boat started. Still I was worried. For all I knew a German destroyer might overtake the boat, stop her and search her. It was no time to take any chances. I went below and got a piece of iron from one of the engineers. I took all the papers I had taken from the German, wrapped them with the piece of iron inside a shirt, tied the bundle tightly, and as soon as we got out to sea I dropped the bundle overboard.

Germany declared war next day.

I landed at Leith in Scotland and took the next train to London. There I made my report to the Russian Embassy.

Then I went over to Lloyd's to tell some of my friends there that I was going to join up with the British Navy for the war.

"There's a job where we need you first," they told me at Lloyd's. "It's war work, too."

It was a crazy job taking a crazy craft from England to Quebec. She was a floating grain elevator built on the Tees below Middlesbrough. She was a five-thousand-ton piece of construction that could make six knots

in smooth water. What made her crazy was a hundred-and-twenty-foot steel tower jutting up amidships. If you got enough wind pressure against that tower, you could put her engines full speed ahead and she would go backward like a crab.

I took her out of the Tees planning to go around the north of Scotland. And then the wind swung around and I was half-way across the North Sea to Germany with her before I could claw out of it. I managed to put in at Aberdeen. There I took on an added thousand tons of coal for ballast in the hope that that might give me better control of her. Then I headed up around the north of Scotland once more.

We started to go through Pentland Firth, that narrow, tortuous channel between the north of Scotland and the Orkneys, trying to go through with the tide. But just off Dunnet Head a fresh northwest wind caught us and held us, the tide turned on us, and back we went in spite of the engines going full steam ahead. It was maddening.

Suddenly two British destroyers came racing out to halt and inspect us. The destroyer commander told me he thought we were some new and hitherto unknown type of German mystery ship. We went into Long Hope near Scapa Flow, waited for a favorable wind, and then took another try. This time we made it.

I was twenty-one days reaching the Straits of Belle Isle. Then a strong wind from the west caught me, and I had to put in at Chateau Bay. The inhabitants were in a panic of fright. They, too, thought we were some mysterious German war-ship come to ravage the coast. But at last we reached Quebec, I turned over the crazy thing, and caught the next boat back. It landed me in Glasgow.

I took the next train up to London and reported to Commander Lecky at the British Admiralty. I came out from that interview commissioned a full lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. The show was on, for me.

My first orders sent me down to the Naval Base at Devonport for a couple of weeks. Then I was ordered to Chatham to put in commission one of the first armed trawlers the British Navy sent out. These trawlers played a very real part in the war. In peace time they were the fishing fleet. They were steel craft of from three hundred to one thousand tons, driven by steam, and the most seaworthy things afloat. They could develop a speed up to fourteen knots. They were manned with a crew of around twenty-five to thirty men. They were armed with three-pounder and six-pounder naval quick-firers, and were equipped with wireless. Their job was to patrol the coast of the British Isles, worry and, if possible, sink any submarines they saw, and re

port by wireless any German war-ship they might spot. The Admiralty had equipped them with depth bombs for the submarines.

The British Navy started with one such trawler. At the Armistice we had twenty-five hundred of them on the job.

CHAPTER XI

HONORS OF WAR

Submarine chasing about England—I receive a decoration from the King.

THE first command they gave me in the British Navy was the trawler *Vidette*. She was a craft of three hundred and sixty tons gross. I put her into commission at Chatham and took her around to Shields on the Tyne. The parent ship was stationed there. Shields was to be my working base. My patrol was from the Tyne north to Berwick and south to Flamborough Head.

It was Christmas week, 1914, when I nosed out of Shields on my first patrol. The winter gales were blowing. The Germans already had scattered floating mines all up and down our coast.

Those patrols were ticklish stuff. We had to travel full speed ahead, night and day. We had to take our chances between the German mines and the rocks of the English coast.

Not a light could show on night patrol. Double blankets were fastened over every port-hole. The night

before we left our base we would light everything we had below, and an inspecting officer would circle outside the ship looking for light-cracks. If he found the faintest sign of one he would raise hell in language you never find in the dictionary.

The weather on those first few patrols was rougher than anybody wanted, but about the middle of February, 1915, we ran into a winter storm in the *Vidette* that set records. I was making my way along the deck when a great sea crashed aboard. It swept me off my feet and slammed me against an iron ladder. One of my legs was badly wrenched and lacerated and bruised. I was lucky the bone wasn't fractured in two or three places. I managed to get to my berth, but inside half an hour I couldn't put an ounce of weight on that foot. When we got back to Shields they carried me to the hospital. I had to spend three weeks in bed.

On March fifteenth I was able to report for duty again, this time at Long Hope, near Scapa Flow, the headquarters of the Grand Fleet. I was ordered to duty aboard the *Zaria*, an old Elder Dempster freight and passenger steamer of eight thousand tons. Now she was serving as a parent ship of the auxiliary patrol of the Grand Fleet. She was a floating machine-shop and a warehouse of spare parts. She was a floating club for the patrol officers, too.

Then they gave me command of the *Tenby Castle*. She was a bigger trawler than the *Vidette*. And she was a proper perfume factory. The reek of her old cargoes of fish permeated everything aboard. I took her out on patrol off the Orkneys, fox-hunting submarines. Patrol after patrol was filled with excitement. We had a constant series of alarms and went off on a lot of chases after submarines. But though we expended a lot of ammunition and many depth charges, we could report no certain results.

I was back at Long Hope June first, after one of those patrols. That night I was sitting watching a moving-picture in the *Zaria's* ward-room mess. Her captain was sitting beside me. A signalman came in with a signal for him. He read it. It was from the commander-in-chief of the Grand Fleet.

"Ready for sea?" he asked me.

"All ready, sir," I told him.

"Get your men aboard ship as soon as you can," he said. "You're sailing at the earliest possible moment."

"Where?" I asked.

"Sealed orders," he told me.

Things moved fast the next few hours. I sent one of my juniors ashore to round up my men. I had to go ashore myself to the admiral's quarters at Long Hope, to get certain charts they didn't have on the *Zaria*. My

orders included putting ashore an explosive sweep and a hundred charges of T.N.T. I had aboard the *Tenby Castle*. Just after midnight every man was aboard, and every job was done. At one o'clock in the morning I started.

I steamed, as directed, off Muckle Flugga, the northernmost point of the Shetland Islands. There, according to instructions, I opened my sealed orders.

They were simple. I was to proceed toward the coast of Norway, and heave to just off Kya Islet, which was a pinprick on the chart just off the Norwegian coast. I was to avoid all possible trouble with the Norwegian Navy, which was neutral. But I was to cut out every freighter I suspected of having cargo for Germany.

The Germans, it seemed, were getting shiploads of Swedish magnetic iron ore from Narvik. It made the best steel in the world. Germany needed it desperately in her gun factories.

The Germans were getting other supplies by that route, too, it seemed. These supplies were shipped in by neutral nations to Sweden and Norway, also neutrals, and were ostensibly for Swedish and Norwegian consumption, though actually they were getting through to Germany.

The freighters would skirt the Norwegian coast just inside the three-mile limit, so we could not seize them

in Norwegian territorial waters. But at Kya Islet they would have to go outside territorial waters for a little way. That was my chance. The main object, as I saw it, was to get these ships, even if I did have to edge inside the three-mile limit a little bit, if I could do it without tangling with the Norwegian Navy.

On the way to Kya Islet I had the crew dirty up the old *Tenby Castle* so she looked like a typical trawler on a fishing voyage. The better I could fool those German freighters, the closer I could get to them. I had the trawling net slung in the rigging. My guns were hidden beneath the hanging net and a lot of old tarpaulins. The British Navy would have disowned us on the general dirtiness of our unkempt and frowsy appearance long before we got there.

It was daylight twenty-four hours a day off Kya Islet that time of year. I hove to outside the three-mile limit and waited for the first German freighter to show up.

But the first vessel we saw proved to be a Norwegian gunboat. About four o'clock that morning she came steaming out to look us over.

"*Tenby Castle*, ahoy!" she hailed us as she came alongside. "What are you doing here?"

There was no use trying to fool that skipper. I broke out the white ensign that proclaimed me a naval vessel.

The Norwegian skipper had a boat put out and came

aboard. He proved to be Commander Malthe Brunn. And a fine chap he was. I took him into my room and we had a couple of whisky-sodas together.

"I must warn you officially to keep outside the three-mile limit," he said at parting.

We shook hands and he went back to his gunboat. I pulled out a little farther offshore to be on the safe side, while he was still in sight.

Next morning about four o'clock I saw a freighter coming toward us. She flew no flag. I headed for her, steamed around her stern and saw by her name that she was German. I steamed up level with her bow, broke out my flag, and fired a shot across her bow.

Up to this minute, the German captain had paid absolutely no attention to me. Now he swung his bow around and headed full speed for the beach, to find safety in neutral waters. It was up to me to stop him.

"Shoot the steering-gear off him!" I ordered my guncrew. They concentrated on the steering-gear on his poop. In half a dozen shots they got it. One of the shots cut the chain. The German began to steer in circles. Then he stopped his engines.

I steamed alongside, boarded him with an armed party, and took the crew prisoners. For a souvenir of my first capture in the war, I took a five-pound piece of steel that had been shot off the German's rudder quad-

rant, and landed at my feet on the *Tenby Castle* bridge.

The British cruiser *Victorian* was hovering forty miles offshore. My orders were to report any capture to her.

I investigated the German ship, went back to the *Tenby Castle*, and wirelessly the *Victorian* that I had a German freighter loaded with five thousand tons of Swedish magnetic iron ore.

"Do nothing until I arrive," wirelessly the cruiser commander in reply.

That was a hell of a note. It was time to get busy that minute. We were squatted right on the three-mile limit. A Norwegian war-ship might show up any moment. But orders were orders. I stood by until the cruiser showed up.

"Congratulations. Come aboard," the *Victorian* signaled.

I had a boat lowered and crossed over from the *Tenby Castle*.

"We've got to have a drink to celebrate," was the first thing the cruiser's commander said when I stepped on her deck.

I cut the invitation as short as you can cut your superior officer's invitations, but that isn't any too short. "We'll have trouble if we don't get busy, sir," I told him. "That rock out there marks the limit of territorial waters."

He sent for the German crew, and let me go aboard the prize. I wanted to take her home to England. We could use that iron ore. I was hot at work supervising the repair of the steering-gear we had shot away—when out came Commander Brunn in his Norwegian gunboat. He steamed up alongside. The cruiser and the *Tenby Castle* closed in, too.

"You are in the territorial waters of Norway, gentlemen," said Commander Brunn.

He was damned well right. We were.

I tried to bluff it out. I knew now there would be no chance to get her to England, so I wanted to get that prize at least outside the three-mile limit and sink the blighter.

"I drifted inside the three-mile limit after I made the capture," I protested to Commander Brunn.

I think I was going to get away with it, too, when the Norwegian pilot called out something to Commander Brunn in his own language. I didn't know any Norwegian. Commander Brunn listened intently to the pilot, and then suggested we all go aboard the British cruiser and talk it over with her commander. There was no way out of it. I had to go. And aboard the cruiser I was subordinate, and I had to take the decision of my superior officer.

We lost the prize. At the end of the conference, Commander Brunn towed the German ashore.

I reported the whole incident somewhat heatedly by wireless to Admiral Sir John Rushworth Jellicoe, commander-in-chief of the Grand Fleet. And presently the orders from Jellicoe came back to me:

"Take orders from me only. Use your own judgment after this. Will hold you responsible."

Nobody could ask more than that.

I headed north to Vest Fjord and hung around there for a few days. Vest Fjord was a hundred and eighty miles long and thirty miles wide at the mouth. It looked like good hunting-ground to me. I was determined not to lose the next prize.

About two o'clock one morning we lay hove to in a thick fog when we heard a steamer coming. The fog was beginning to lift. I got under way and headed for the sound. Presently I found her.

She was a German ship with the German flag flying. I knew that if we weren't inside the three-mile limit we were damned close to it, but the Germans weren't barring many holds or many blows when they were fighting, and I saw no reason I should get suddenly too fussy over a half-mile or so. I decided to get her.

I stationed a lookout to watch for a Norwegian warship, and then ordered a shot fired across the German's bow. She went straight ahead. I fired a dozen shots across her bow, and she paid no attention to them.

"Put a solid shot through her funnel," I told my gun-crew.

They did it. The German shut down her engines. I came alongside and boarded her.

"Gunboat coming, sir!" my lookout began to shout just as I reached the German's deck.

I peered around through the thinning fog. I could barely make out a Norwegian gunboat headed for us at full speed.

"We'll sink her and clear off," I ordered.

We hustled the German crew aboard the *Tenby Castle*, and the minute the last man stepped on our deck I ordered my gun-crew to open up on the German's water-line with high explosive shells. In five minutes she went down.

I headed out for open sea at the best speed we had. The Norwegian chased us a while, and then gave it up.

Safely out at sea I reported sinking the German to Commander William Kennedy of the British auxiliary cruiser *India*, a converted old P. and O. Liner. Presently he came steaming up alongside. Bill Kennedy was a fine fellow. He was a rich man, and when he went to war he brought his own chef, his own valet, and his own stores aboard with him.

"How's your grub?" was the first thing he asked me after congratulating me.

"Down to hardtack and bully beef," I told him.

Out of his own personal stores Bill Kennedy stocked me up for a month with choice food and wines.

"From what are you eating?" he asked next.

"The usual warrant officers' ironstone china," I told him. "Why?"

I soon discovered why he asked. He sent aboard a load of his private china and table cutlery—and a case of the best Scotch I've ever tasted.

I signaled thanks and good-by and headed north.

Cruising up and down that coast I discovered a place offshore where a long reef and some low rocks looked like good hunting-grounds. They would force any ship outside the three-mile limit. I hung around there for a few days.

I was rewarded. I sighted another big freighter heading down the coast one morning. She was flying the Swedish flag, but the cut of her jib looked German to me.

I stopped her, boarded her, and examined her papers. The whole show looked more German than ever.

"Captain, we're Swedish!" her master protested over and over again.

"You may be a Swede, but you're going to England and get a chance to prove it," I told him.

"But we can not go to England," he protested.

"The hell you can't! You're going to," I said.

He went, too. I put a prize crew aboard him, signaled the cruiser *India*, got some coal from Bill Kennedy, her skipper, and off to England the prize started. There it was definitely proved to be a German. The following week a German submarine sent north to sink us found us gone but got the *India* and sunk her in Vest Fjord. Commander Kennedy and some of the crew were saved and spent the rest of the war in an internment camp in Norway.

So it went up and down the coast in the old *Tenby Castle*, now and then putting back in at Scapa Flow for stores. There was a staunch little craft.

Once I was crossing the North Sea in her with the rest of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron when we hit a hurricane. Vice-Admiral Aubrey Du Chair was aboard a converted cruiser, the old *Teutonic*, that before the war had been a famous White Star Liner on the western ocean. I suppose she had crossed the western ocean at least two thousand times.

Every hour through that hurricane Admiral Du Chair kept wirelessly me on the *Tenby Castle*: "Are you all right?"

At last it got me mad. I wirelessed back to him: "Don't worry about me. Look after yourself."

And the joke of it was that after that storm was over

the *Teutonic* headed back for England and spent six months in dry-dock getting repaired for the damages the storm did to her, while the little *Tenby Castle* went right ahead with her job.

There's no craft afloat can weather the hardest storm better than the average, ordinary British trawler.

That's the way the game ran. The old *Tenby Castle* was lucky enough to be able to put a crimp in the German's little game down the coast of Norway. I would have to dig up Admiralty records to know exactly how many German freighters we captured or sank, but it was quite a number. Sometimes we got them out in open sea. Sometimes we got them inside the three-mile limit, with one eye cocked for a Norwegian gunboat. But war is war.

When that job was over, Admiral Jellicoe was decent enough to recommend me for a decoration. On June 25, 1915, I was gazetted for the Distinguished Service Cross. But I had already received my decoration from my brother officers. They had christened me the "Pirate of the Grand Fleet."

I was out on duty with the Grand Fleet when I was gazetted. It was not until May 17, 1916, when I was ashore, that I was summoned up to London to present myself at Buckingham Palace and get the D. S. C. from King George V.

I was up early that morning, polishing myself up. I began to get nervous the minute I started from my hotel. I continued to get more nervous rapidly. At last I reached Buckingham Palace. I was conducted into an anteroom. One of the officials at court instructed me in what I was to do, just as I had been instructed what to wear. Then this official pinned on the breast of my uniform coat a little wire hook bent like the letter "S." The King doesn't actually pin the decoration on you. So many get decorated at one of these levees, that it would be too much of a job. When you step before him, he hangs your decoration on the little hook.

Waiting there in the anteroom, I began to perspire. I had a handkerchief in the breast pocket of my coat. I kept pulling it out, mopping my forehead, and stuffing it back again. One of these times the little hook must have caught in the handkerchief and pulled out of my coat, though I didn't notice it at the time.

At last I stood before King George. He reached over to hang the decoration on the hook. And there was no hook. Of course the King knew from the citation the name of every man he decorated.

"You seem to have lost your hook, Randell," his Majesty said.

"It must have caught in my handkerchief, sir," I said, getting hotter than ever.

"Never mind," said the King. "I'll pin it on."

As he did so, he noticed my South African War medals.

"You should be accustomed to receiving decorations by now," he said, smiling.

"Her Majesty pinned them on me when she was the Duchess of York and you were both visiting St. John's, Newfoundland, sir," I managed to say. "I was your official escort there."

He smiled, shook hands with me, and said something pleasant—though I'm damned if I can remember what it was. I couldn't remember a minute later, I was so nervous. His Majesty passed on to the next.

There were admirals and generals, colonels and majors and what-not in the lot of us, some getting the V. C., and some the D. S. O., and some the D. S. C.

Presently we were permitted to go. A week later they helped me "wet my decoration" in the ward-room mess of *H. M. S. Iron Duke*, which was Admiral Jellicoe's flag-ship.

Then back on duty again I went.

CHAPTER XII

SUBMARINES TO BOOTLEGGERS

More submarine adventures—The end of the war—I have my first experience with prohibition in the United States.

IT WAS in 1917. It had begun to look as if the war was going to last forever. Three years of it, day and night, had made routine of a tension that at the start seemed enough to crack your nerves inside three months.

That year they gave me a new command. She was the armed trawler *Rushcoe*, and she was the biggest steam-trawler in the world. I was gazetted flotilla commander of special service ship attached to the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, with sixteen ships.

Sir Aleck Black, the big Grimsby trawler owner, had had her built for his fleet in 1914. That was a sweet craft. She was a perfect beauty.

Sir Aleck had named her in honor of Admiral Jellicoe, taking two syllables out of his full name of John Rushworth Jellicoe. Also Sir Aleck had ordered quarters built into her for his personal occupancy whenever he wanted to cruise in her. Those were my quarters

now. Rosewood panels and cut-glass and silvered light-fixtures and plate-glass mirrors and nickel plate were all over the place. It was a luxurious contrast to the old *Tenby Castle*.

There wasn't a more seaworthy craft in the world, either. She was built to battle the worst the North Sea could give. She could fight her way uninjured through a storm that would send a cruiser into the shipyard for repairs. She did it more than once.

She carried three hundred and fifty tons of coal in her bunkers, and when I first took command of her, she was armed with a twelve-pounder and a six-pounder, both naval quick-firers.

I looked her over and saw a chance for one improvement. I went straight to old Vice-Admiral Sir Reginald Tupper, K. C. M. G., K. C. V. O., commander of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron of the Grand Fleet, to which I was still attached.

"Sir Reginald," I said, "I want a four-inch naval gun mounted on the forecastle deck of the *Rushcoe*."

"You can't have it," said Sir Reginald, in the charming way admirals have.

"Why not, sir?" I asked.

I knew there were some of those new four-inch guns waiting for service. In the British Navy they were mounted on the biggest destroyers.

"The weight of that gun will lower the *Rushcoe's* stability so much she'll become unseaworthy," said Sir Reginald.

In my eagerness I forgot for a moment that he was an admiral.

"Unseaworthy, hell!" I told him. "The *Rushcoe* is twice the size of the dredger *Pungue* that I took from Glasgow around the Cape of Good Hope to Beira in Portuguese East Africa."

"What has that got to do with it?" asked Sir Reginald.

"The *Pungue's* bridge was over thirty feet high," I exploded. "Her bucket tumbler and two driving-wheels weighed over forty tons. Her bucket ladder and buckets weighed over eighty tons in the aggregate. Her superstructure combined with all that machinery gave her an aggregate of over one hundred and sixty tons above her main deck. And the gun I want on the *Rushcoe* weighs less than eight tons. You know nothing at all about stability!"

"Apparently not," said the old boy. He even smiled. I've thought ever since that probably it was a delightful change to have somebody stand up against him.

"You can have your gun, Randell," he said with a chuckle.

And I got it.

The addition of that four-inch gun to the twelve-pounder and the six-pounder, together with our depth charges against submarines, made the *Rushcoe* really formidable.

I took her out on the northern patrol. We were cruising from the Hebrides to Iceland, out of sight of land, and about a hundred and fifty miles off the coast one morning, when I heard firing. We couldn't see a thing, but I started full speed ahead toward the sound of the guns. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when I sighted a French sailing ship. Her sails were hanging. Her halyards and her sheets were loose—cut away by shell-fire. I steamed straight toward her.

Then I saw the German submarine. The U-Boat had come to the surface and was firing shells at the French crew. The Frenchmen in a life-boat were rowing desperately. The water was splashing on them from the German shells.

We were about ten thousand yards away when I gave my gun-crew orders to open fire with that four-inch gun. We got a short. Then we got an over. The two splashes showed clearly. We had her bracketed. We started walking through the bracket with four-inch high explosive shells. The fifth shot registered on her conning-tower with a burst of flame. The submarine disappeared.

She never showed up again. We cruised back and forth over the spot. There was a big oil-slick on the surface where the submarine had vanished, and though we saw no floating wreckage, I think we must have sunk her.

That direct hit with a four-inch shell must have torn the conning-tower clean off her.

In the meantime the French sailing ship had sunk. The U-Boat had been only five hundred yards away from her, pumping shells into her, before the Germans started shelling the crew in the life-boat. We picked up the French crew and brought them to land.

About three months afterward I received from the French Admiralty an illuminated parchment scroll citing me for "*sauvetage*."

I grew very fond of the *Rushcoe* and very proud of her. She was a dream to handle, in any weather.

In the autumn of 1917, out on patrol in her, again I was cruising off the coast of Iceland. My orders were to rendezvous with the French cruiser *Artois* at a designated position. I was making for the rendezvous.

We were steaming along in the center of a perfectly empty horizon when again I heard the sounds of gunfire, though we could see nothing from the *Rushcoe*. The sound of the guns was coming from the direction of that designated rendezvous. I called below to my

engineers to give the *Rushcoe* all they had, and we started for the spot at top speed.

About two o'clock that afternoon we sighted the *Artois* and raced ahead toward her. She was doing the firing. As we came nearer I could see through my glasses that her guns were blazing away at the conning-tower of a German submarine, now just visible above the surface. Then I saw the streaks in the water where three torpedoes were speeding toward the *Artois*, one behind the other. They barely missed their target. It was one of the closest shaves a cruiser ever had.

The gun-crews of the *Artois* were working their weapons as fast as they could fire them, but they seemed to be shooting wide of the submarine. The *Artois* was swinging in a big curve and racing away from the U-Boat at top speed.

I steamed straight in, driving at the U-Boat with all the speed we had. I could see she was submerging, so I didn't waste any time with gun-fire. In a very few moments we were over her estimated position, and my men at the depth bombs began to "lay eggs." We dropped about twenty depth bombs in all, covering the area pretty thoroughly. Presently up to the surface came a great gush of oil, and spread in a wide oil-slick. Everybody aboard the *Rushcoe* saw it plainly. But again no wreckage floated up.

We always believed we got her, but we never knew.

The commander of the *Artois* reported this action to the French Admiralty. Three months later Vice-Admiral Sir Reginald Tupper, my squadron commander, summoned me to his flag-ship. When I came into his quarters he shook hands cordially.

"Something to add to your collection, Randell," he smiled.

And he handed me a little leather case and a citation. In the case was the Croix de Guerre from France.

That late summer and early autumn of 1917 was a busy time for us on the *Rushcoe*. We had six scraps in one week with six different German submarines. I never claimed officially that I sank even one of them, because no wreckage came to the surface in any of the six scraps. But the members of my crew always swore that we had got at least three of them.

It was the same stuff every time. We would sight a periscope or a U-Boat on the surface and dash for it, shooting at it with all the gun-fire we could bring to bear on it, on the chance of knocking off the periscope or the conning-tower if we couldn't hull them. The U-Boat always submerged before our advance. Then the minute we got over the spot where she sank, we cut loose with the depth charges. We had depth bomb throwers astern and on each quarter. They would flip

out those charges of T.N.T. some fifty yards beyond the rail at a trajectory of forty-five degrees.

The western ocean between the Hebrides, the Shetlands, the Faroes and Iceland was a busy hunting-ground those days.

The British Admiralty seemed to like my work. Early in 1918 I was cited again by Admiral Tupper for general work and mentioned in British dispatches. France awarded me two palms for my Croix de Guerre, and the British Admiralty awarded me the oak leaf to wear on my general service ribbon, which meant "mentioned in dispatches."

Then in January, 1918, I was ordered to leave the *Rushcoe* and report for special duty down at Weymouth. There I found I was one of some three hundred picked naval officers. Every man in the lot had been decorated for service under fire. Wherever you looked in that crowd you saw the V. C., the D. S. O., the D. S. C., the Croix de Guerre, and Belgian and Italian decorations. We had been called in for special training.

The British Navy had a new weapon against the submarine. It was the new Fish Hydrophone. And it was a marvel. With it you could detect the beat of a screw anywhere within ten miles at any depth. If a submarine moved at all, it had to announce its coming.

They trained us in submarines with that Fish Hydro-

phone. We had to learn to identify the beat of the screw of every class of ship. We had to study and perfect ourselves in knowledge of the construction and the principles of the Fish Hydrophone.

It was brand-new in naval warfare. It was the death knell of the German U-Boat.

Then when our training was done, the British Admiralty organized the Fish Hydrophone Flotilla. *H. M. S. Implacable*, a battle-ship, was detailed as the parent ship for the vessels equipped with the hydrophone. *H. M. S. Gibraltar*, a cruiser, was detailed as parent ship for the destroyers and mine sweepers which acted as bombers. In the flotilla were sixty-three hydrophone ships, twenty destroyers and mine sweepers as bombers. Each was equipped with one thousand depth bombs loaded with T.N.T.

It was in June, 1918, that this outfit got into action. It was deadly. We began to get German submarines at the rate of six a week. The German Admiralty was dumfounded. They knew something mysterious had entered into the game. It was outside their calculations. All they knew was that the U-Boats went out, and they didn't come back.

Day after day we were able to spot them ten miles away, out of sight beneath the surface. We could trail them and nail them as easily as if they were laying on

the surface with crippled engines. Worse than that, once we spotted them, all we had to do was to set our trap and wait with a grin while they walked squarely into it as if they were blind. All the pursuing we had to do was to cruise until we got within ten miles of one. It was the greatest deep-sea fox-hunt in history.

Once that flotilla of ours got going, there wasn't an officer among us who would have taken command of a battle-ship in the Grand Fleet, if it had meant giving up that work.

I was made section commander in that flotilla, with six ships under my command. My flag-ship was the *John Johnson*. I hope Jack Johnson, the negro prize-fighter, won't think it was named after him. The ships of that flotilla were named after the crew lists of Nelson's old flag-ship, the *Victory*, that now rests at Portsmouth as a national memorial. *John Johnson* was one of Lord Nelson's sailors at Trafalgar.

Four ships of each section were equipped with the new Fish Hydrophone. The others dropped depth bombs. It was a sweet sight to watch us at work.

The moment we picked up the beat of a submarine screw through that apparatus, we formed an equilateral triangle with those hydrophone ships and began to close in, still in that triangular formation, taking bearings every twenty minutes.

We had the right of way over all that part of the ocean. When one of those chases was on, we flew a big black flag about twenty-four feet long by sixteen feet wide. There wasn't a battle-ship in the Grand Fleet but had to stop its engines when it saw that flag. The old black rag halted everything in sight.

There we were, closing in on the submerged U-Boat that didn't even know it was being chased. As we got nearer to it, we would hoist a red flag and a black ball. As the red flag reached the peak, the destroyers in the section dashed in for the indicated position. When the black ball dropped on my ship, they started dropping their depth charges.

And it was all over with the German submarine.

We would have wiped the U-Boat off the seas if the war had lasted much longer. We had it licked when the Armistice came.

I remained on duty with the British Navy all that spring and early summer of 1919, and in July, 1919, they sent me home to Newfoundland. There they demobilized me with the rank of lieutenant-commander, Royal Naval Reserve.

I had only been resting at home for a couple of weeks when Captain Webb, Marine Superintendent of the Canadian Government Merchant Marine, telegraphed me to come to Montreal. When I came he offered me

the command of a five-thousand-ton ship. I declined it. He asked me to call next day. This time he offered me the command of the *Canadian Miller*, a big eighty-five-hundred-ton freighter then in the stocks. She was the second big steamship built by the Canadian Government following the World War.

Two months later, when she was finished, I took her over. I commanded her till January, 1921.

I was in Montreal in 1919 when the Prince of Wales was visiting Canada. Naturally I wanted a look at him.

I knew there was no chance to get through the police lines in civilian clothes, so I put on my old navy uniform. One look at that, and the police let me through the lines at the Montreal railroad station.

I was standing there watching the Prince, when suddenly somebody hit me on the shoulder. I wheeled and looked.

There was Admiral Sir Lionel Halsey, K. C. B., Comptroller of the Household of the Prince of Wales. The last time I had seen him was when he was Captain Lionel Halsey, flag-captain to Admiral Jellicoe, and we were in the ward-room mess of *H. M. S. Iron Duke*, Jellicoe's flag-ship, the night they were helping me wet my D. S. C.

That was the night Sir Lionel himself had christened me the "Pirate of the Grand Fleet" for the exploits of



Captain Randell as a lieutenant commander of the Royal Naval Reserve, toward
the end of the war



Captain Randell and his staff on board the *Canadian Firber*, just before its first voyage. Randell is seated in the center. Taken in January, 1921

the old *Tenby Castle* in cutting out German freighters off the coast of Norway.

We talked for a moment there in the Montreal station.

"Stay where you are a bit," said Sir Lionel. He went over to the Prince of Wales and said something in his ear. Then he dragged me up and presented me to the Prince.

My medals were on my uniform. The Prince looked at them.

"You seem to have about all the medals there are, Randell," said the Prince, smiling.

"I've one from your great-grandmother, one from your grandfather, and one from your father, sir," I said. "And I hope I never have to get one from you."

"Why not, Randell?" asked the Prince.

"I've had all the war I want, sir," I said.

"I think you're right," said the Prince of Wales.

The first twelve months of that job was the routine run from Montreal to Liverpool with general cargo. But in the summer of 1920 I took her to South America, in a voyage that included visits to Santos, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Montevideo.

Here in South America started a train of events that led me to my first sight of the American bootlegger in all his glory. Like other Canadians, I had smiled at the

news that America had plumped for prohibition. And like other Canadians I had never dreamed what fantastic and grotesque developments would follow.

At Rio de Janeiro I met an old friend, the agent of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, and went ashore to dine with him. He promised to have his launch take me back on board the *Canadian Miller* after ten o'clock that night.

The launch vanished and couldn't be found. We went from the water-front to the Palace Hotel on the Avenida de Branca. There by chance I encountered another old friend I had known for years—Colonel O'Sullivan-Beare, British Consul General for Brazil. He wouldn't let me take a room at that hotel. I must stay in his suite.

Then he told me Mrs. O'Sullivan-Beare and their daughter were in New York, where the daughter was studying music. Would I take a few small parcels from him to them when I went north? Of course I would.

Next day, like any tourist, I went up the Sugar Loaf for the view. On top I met a gentleman and his wife from Montevideo. We chatted, discovered mutual friends in Montevideo, and he made me promise to visit his father when I reached that city.

I paid that visit and had a delightful time. Later when I was in Buenos Aires, I received an invitation to

return to Montevideo to attend the wedding of the brother of the man I had met up on the Sugar Loaf. The brother was marrying the daughter of the President of Uruguay. I went to the wedding. We had a lovely time. The wedding party over, I wanted to return to Buenos Aires. There was only one ship. That was a vessel of the Hamburg-American Line. I was in uniform. The war was too recent. I refused to sail on a German.

Then a friend in the Royal Bank of Canada told me that the *Aurigny*, a French liner, had arrived that morning and was to leave for Buenos Aires that afternoon. He took me to the office to see the agent. I was still in my uniform, with decorations.

The minute that French agent saw my Croix de Guerre with the two palms, my money was no good. He took me into his private office and started to present me to the captain of the *Aurigny*.

We whooped and fell upon each other's necks!

He had been a senior lieutenant on the French cruiser *Artois* when I had nailed the German submarine that came so close to getting him off Iceland!

I certainly owned the *Aurigny* that voyage. And the party that continued when we reached Buenos Aires made history.

Back in New York, I looked up Mrs. O'Sullivan-

Beare and her daughter. I delivered the parcels Colonel O'Sullivan-Beare had sent. And Mrs. O'Sullivan-Beare introduced me to a British official stationed at New York.

All the way up on the voyage from South America I had enjoyed the best Scotch whisky I ever drank. It had been sent out for the Prince of Wales while he was on his South American tour. It was special stuff, distilled for the use of his Royal Highness and his party. But they sent so much of it out from Scotland that it would have loaded down *H. M. S. Renown*, the British battle cruiser on which the Prince traveled, until the decks were awash, if they had taken it all on board. They had to leave a lot behind.

I had picked up ten cases of it in Barbadoes. That regal stuff made ordinarily good Scotch taste poor.

Fresh from the flavor of that superb liquor, I went out to Staten Island for a week-end, the guest of the British official I had met in New York. There I got my first taste of American bootleg whisky. The British official served it. I am ashamed to have to admit it, but luckily we were sitting, as we drank, in a living-room that had long French windows opening out on a veranda. I had got about half my whisky-soda down when I had to dash through that window and hang over the veranda rail. I was as seasick as a landlubber afloat in his first storm. I never tasted such fearful liquor.

I came back and apologized. Then my host apologized.

"We grow accustomed to drinking that stuff here in the States," he said, "and we forget the effect it may have on people from home."

Later in the day we were walking on the grounds of my host's home. As we strolled down by the gate, past which ran the road, a man drove up in a magnificent new Cadillac sedan. He stopped the car, climbed out, and started to talk to my host. As my host made no motion to introduce us, I stepped to one side.

But I couldn't take my eyes off that visitor. He looked to me like a cross between a stevedore and a crook. Yet here he was, driving that expensive car, dressed in expensive tailored clothes, and wearing more diamonds than I had ever seen on a man in my life.

A regular locomotive headlight of a diamond was in his scarf-pin. Half a dozen more big diamonds were set in heavy gold and platinum rings he wore. His platinum watch fob glittered with another cluster of big diamonds.

"Who's the owner of the Crown Jewels, for heaven's sake?" I asked my host when the torchlight parade climbed back into his custom-built car and drove away.

"He's my local bootlegger," said my host.

That was the first time I had ever seen a bootlegger. I wished I had taken a swing at him, for selling human

beings such poisonous stuff as had made me ill. It was my first realization of this angle of prohibition.

I went back to Montreal with a new story to tell, about what a bootlegger looked like, and what his customers felt like.

From Montreal we went to England and on my return I was given command of the *Canadian Fisher*. I went up to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and took her over. She was the inaugural ship of the Canadian National Passenger Line to the West Indies. Canada rather celebrated the inauguration of that service. It was the first time in my life I had ever been in the moving-pictures!

I made only one voyage in the *Canadian Fisher*. Already I had been making arrangements to go into business in Halifax as a ship-broker and a marine commission man. So when that voyage ended I resigned and thought I was settled down for life ashore.

But then some business men got me interested in a gypsum mining property in Newfoundland. Some gold-mining property was in our holdings, too. We organized the Anglo-Newfoundland Mining Corporation under the laws of the State of Delaware in the United States. I was elected one of the directors.

As a mining director I was a good sea-captain.

The business got caught in the doldrums. I began to see where I could use more money than was coming in.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RUM FLEET

I become a rum runner and learn more about prohibition.

IT WAS in 1921, while I was in command of the *Canadian Fisher*, that I first heard the story of the *Saucy Arethusa*. Shipping men and business men in Halifax first laughed about it and then began to think.

The *Saucy Arethusa* was a schooner. She loaded at St. Pierre, Miquelon, French possession off the south coast of Newfoundland, with a cargo of splendid champagne and brandy. She sailed south, and one clear Sunday morning she anchored a little more than three miles off Atlantic City. Two or three pleasure launches, cruising about, happened alongside. The captain of the schooner told them what he had aboard. They bought a case or two apiece, and put in for Atlantic City. They started the rush.

It reminded us in Canada of the story of the little sea-port in Cornwall in the old days where everybody lived by looting ships that were wrecked and driven ashore

on the rocky coast. The congregation was in church one Sunday morning when a man rushed down the aisle in the middle of the sermon.

"Ship ashore! Ship ashore!" he shouted.

Everybody jumped up to leave the church when the parson called: "Just a minute, brethren. Let us ask God's blessing on our undertaking." While giving the blessing he was coming down from the pulpit, taking off his surplice. By the time he had reached the aisle he had finished the blessing, shed his robes and shouted, "Now then, all hands start fair."

Something like that happened in Atlantic City that Sunday. By four o'clock that afternoon, hundreds of launches were swarming about the *Saucy Arethusa*. Every launch owner was yelling for liquor. The schooner's captain and supercargo were stuffing cash into a burlap sack, while the crew slid the cases over the rail. By nightfall the schooner was empty. Her captain sailed away with eighty-five thousand dollars cash, of which seventy-five thousand dollars was clear profit.

That story kept sticking in my mind as the mining business grew slower and slower. It was in the spring of 1922 that I went to New York on that mining business. American business men I met didn't talk much about mining. But they did talk a lot about liquor and the staggering profits in it.

Back in Halifax I found some business men talking about it, too. At last they put it up to me. We discussed it for days. Finally we decided to take a flyer in the new gold mine.

We bought twelve hundred cases of assorted liquors in Scotland and had it shipped to St. John's, Newfoundland, in transit to Settlement Point, in the Bahamas.

From our point of view, what we were doing was perfectly legal. Legal jurisdiction of any one nation has to stop somewhere, we argued. We were not going to land the liquor inside American territorial waters ourselves.

We chartered the *Dawn*, a small schooner supposed to have two gas engines in her. I didn't see her myself. I left that part of the job to one of my partners, an ex-sea-captain. Then when I first saw the *Dawn* at St. John's, I discovered that she had only one engine, and that wouldn't work!

There was no time nor any chance to charter another craft. We loaded the *Dawn* at St. John's and sent her out under orders to heave to about ten miles off the Ambrose Channel Lightship at New York, where I was to meet her. That little schooner was certainly officered! The owner had his captain on board and my partners put their captain on board as supercargo. I went ahead to New York by steamer. The business men in Halifax

who had invested in the venture sat down to wait for their profits.

The weather turned foggy. Winds were light. On the way the *Dawn* had to put into port for some repairs.

I reached New York to find nearly every second man I met either was in the liquor business or wanted to enter it. Word spread that I had a cargo to sell. Callers began to pour in on me.

Men came to me with offers to buy. Men came with all sorts of propositions. Some had fat rolls of thousand-dollar and five-hundred-dollar bank-notes. They let their money talk. Some didn't have a nickel, but they tried to out-talk the money of the others. This man had friends in the police and the United States Coast Guard, and could guarantee safe landing. That man had friends high in the administration at Washington and could guarantee all kinds of protection for certain sums. Several bluffed that they had paid already a deposit on my cargo. Several others bluffed that they had bought it outright, and told me exactly where to land it.

It didn't even embarrass them to be proved liars. Caught in their lies, they just grinned and started on another tack. It was a new experience to me.

I told them all I was selling over the rail outside the

three-mile limit to the first boats that came alongside and paid the price.

Among them I met a man they called the "Commodore." He was one of those who let his money talk for him. He owned a fast motor sloop and offered to take me out to look for the *Dawn* in Rum Row.

"There's no risk," he said. He looked like a "square-shooter" to me. He was.

About eight o'clock one morning we started from New York in his sloop, reached the position, and scouted around looking for the *Dawn*. We couldn't find her. We asked other vessels if they had seen her. They hadn't. About two o'clock that afternoon we decided she hadn't arrived.

"I've got to take a load back with me," said the Commodore. So we went alongside the *Kirk and Sweeney*, the largest two-masted schooner afloat. She had come up to Rum Row from the Bahamas with some six thousand cases of liquor.

We went aboard and had a drink with her skipper. The Commodore bought one hundred and fifty cases over the rail, paying between thirty-six and forty dollars a case. It was all his little craft could carry.

We started back for land about four o'clock that afternoon. A strong breeze had sprung up from the southwest. The sea was choppy and grew rougher toward

sunset. We wallowed along, with sails and engines both working. Then we shipped a big sea. It filled the cockpit. The engines went dead. And then, with a long way yet to go, our rudder broke off and sank.

The Commodore was no seaman.

"It's all up," he mourned. "Help me throw the liquor overboard, and we'll try to make the lightship."

"Hell!" I told him. "Kids swim this kind of a sea in Newfoundland!"

There was one small oar aboard. I grabbed it and went to work. By two o'clock next morning I had landed the little sloop on Coney Island. My hands were blistered and I was aching all over. But it was exciting. We tied up the sloop in a little boat harbor. There was no chance to discharge the cargo that night, so we paid an old boatman to watch her, and went into town to go to bed. I had a Swedish massage to try to take the kinks out of me, but even that wasn't enough.

That afternoon the Commodore made his arrangements for the unloading. It was to start about ten o'clock that night. I stayed around on the Commodore's invitation. I wanted to see how this business was handled.

By eleven o'clock that night a small truck came rolling up the street. The Commodore had just got it loaded with the liquor when a taxicab came tearing up

with a policeman on the running-board. The door of the taxi swung open. Out stepped a chief of police. The two policemen drew their revolvers and covered us.

"Hands up, there, damn you!" was the first thing I heard. Then: "Don't make a move for your guns or we'll blow your guts out!"

I laughed aloud. There wasn't a gun among the lot of us. The police chief wheeled and glared at me.

"Cut out that cackle if you don't want to get cracked over the conk with this gat!" he ordered. "Now, then," he growled, turning to the Commodore with another glare, "you come across. We know you've got a cargo here and we know you've been landing stuff. We're going to be in on this or you go to jail."

The Commodore was very cool.

"Boys," he said to us, "walk down to the restaurant over there and have a cup of coffee while I talk to the chief, here."

We went. Twenty minutes later the Commodore came in.

"O. K., boys. Let's go," he said.

And when we were walking back to the truck he commented: "That bird held out for a dollar and a half a case. I had to give it to him. Tough luck a feller can't do business without having to come across to

every lousy cop he stumbles over. It takes all the cream out of the profits."

They took their truck into New York and unloaded without further interference. Next day the sloop's rudder was repaired and we went cruising again, searching for the *Dawn*.

We couldn't find her. In the course of the day we had spoken to the schooner *Vincent Black*. We went back to her and the Commodore bought one hundred and fifty cases. Her price was a dollar and a half a case cheaper than the *Kirk and Sweeney*.

"That catches me back on that cop's graft," grinned the Commodore.

He paid cash over the rail, we had a good supper and a few whisky-sodas aboard the *Vincent Black* with her captain, and we started for shore. This time the Commodore had arranged to land outside the jurisdiction of the police who had held him up the night before. We put in on the shore of Jamaica Bay about half past nine that night.

The Commodore had placed two men ashore to warn him if anybody approached the wharf from the shore side. One sentry was behind a shed close to the wharf. The other was some distance up the dirt road leading to the highway. Stepping ashore the Commodore looked around for his man. He saw nobody. He called

several times. There was no answer. Then he called to the other man in the sloop, sitting beside me in the cockpit, to walk a little way up the dirt road.

"See if you can spot anybody coming, and look for that guy who was supposed to give us the O. K.," he said. "Keep your eye skinned for the truck, too. It's due here at ten o'clock."

Just as the Commodore and his man stepped off the wharf, four men sprang out of the shadow of the shed and grappled with them. The Commodore was a fighter. He weighed about two hundred and ten pounds and not much of it was fat. His other man was much smaller, but he knew what to do in a mix-up, too. It was a beautiful scrap before you could say "Jack Robinson." But it was four against two.

The hijackers hadn't seen me, sitting in the cockpit in the dark. I grabbed the tiller, jerked it loose, and jumped into the party about twenty seconds after the first blow was struck.

I singled out the biggest of the four attackers, cracked him on the side of the head with the tiller, and he crumpled to the ground. He was out cold. That left it three to three. It was a fine scrap then. One hijacker got away. We trussed up the other three safely.

Just as we were finishing the job, up rolled the truck and a car. Inside twenty minutes the load of liquor was

out of the sloop, in the truck, and on its way into New York City, the car trailing behind.

We found the Commodore's wharf watchman tied up and gagged behind the wharf-shed. He told us how it happened. The Commodore's man up the dirt road had been planted on his pay-roll by the hijackers. He had tipped them off.

I found a Colt .45 revolver on one of the hijackers as we tied him up. I suppose he had considered it too dangerous to shoot, as there were several houses not five hundred yards away and the shots would have attracted attention.

We left the three of them tied up, knowing the man who got away would come back for them, or somebody would find them. The weather was warm. They were in no danger, except for a few million mosquitoes.

The sloop was taken about five miles away and tied up with a lot of innocent-looking pleasure launches and work boats. The Commodore and I went into New York City.

The next few days the weather was dirty, with heavy east-southeast winds, and none of the small boats went out to Rum Row. I had shifted from my hotel to an apartment in the Fifties, where I stayed with a man who was known up and down Broadway merely as "Jack."

He was contact man for a lot of liquor dealers, and he was one of the busiest men in New York.

The Commodore got rid of his three hundred cases without any trouble, and got orders for more. His least profit was twenty dollars a case. That gave him six thousand dollars for two days' work.

I spent those days when the bad weather kept me ashore in meeting more of the men in New York who were active in the liquor business, and in visiting a number of the speakeasies with them. It was a strange world full of strange figures, this world of the liquor traders in New York. I saw places where the veriest bilge was bottled and sold under counterfeit labels at high prices. It was sickening to think of human beings drinking stuff like that. I saw men who before prohibition couldn't earn one hundred dollars a month. Now they were rolling in a flood of "easy money." It came in so fast they didn't know what to do with it. They did the most fantastic things with it.

I met policemen in uniform, grown casually cynical about it all. I took drinks with many of them. All they had to do was to keep their mouths shut and "look the other way" to make more in a day than their pay for two or three months.

All the poisonous bilge New York was drinking wasn't coming out of the vats in the rear rooms of side-

street basement speakeasies, either. Many of the schooners anchored along Rum Row were loaded with cargoes of cheap brands of Scotch whisky from Nassau in the Bahamas. Some of that stuff was no better than poison. Two drinks of it would put a man to sleep for twenty-four hours.

Real Scotch of decent quality was very scarce in New York just then. I knew that when the *Dawn* got in, I would find a good market. She was loaded with John Haig's "Golden Age" and "Dimple Bottle" and "Special Reserve" and also with some splendid Gilbey's gin. While the cheap brands were selling over the rail at thirty-five dollars a case, the liquor on the *Dawn* was worth at least fifty dollars a case over the rail.

I put in some of my time seeing certain men ashore and making definite arrangements with them to take the *Dawn's* cargo.

Presently the dirty southeaster passed. A bootlegger they called "Captain Jim," whom I had met during those days ashore, had a thirty-five-foot cabin cruiser of the seabright dory type he called the *Porpoise*. She was a splendid sea boat that could make around ten knots and covered a lot of ground. He had offered to take me out and search for the *Dawn*. We went as soon as the weather cleared.

We found her about four miles off Fire Island Light-

ship, trying to head out to sea. We took her in tow, pulled her in to a point about ten miles offshore, and dropped anchor.

We raced back into New York City and I told my customers the liquor was waiting for them to come and get it.

The rush started. I went out every day, supervised the deliveries over the rail, and came in each evening with the cash.

One evening I was to take dinner with the Commadore and his wife. I was late getting back. He decided we would drive out City Island way to a certain inn noted for its fish, oyster and chicken dinners. We arrived there about ten o'clock that night. The Commadore knew the manager. We were given a table by a window, directly across the room from the door.

We were in the middle of our dinner, watching the dancers who were crowding the floor, when we heard a sudden crash. We looked up. We saw a squad of uniformed police come smashing through the door.

"Hands up!" shouted the sergeant in command.

The crowd on the floor concealed us for a moment from the police. The window by our table was open, but screened. Luckily the screen was torn in one corner. The Commadore shoved his solid silver flask through the hole and let it drop. I was carrying a re-

volver, though I had no license permitting me to go armed. But I had nine thousand eight hundred dollars in my pocket—the day's takings on the *Dawn*—and I had figured it was better to take a chance by carrying the weapon, than to carry all that money unarmed. My revolver followed the Commodore's silver flask through the window. It would have gone hard with me, had the police found that weapon and that roll of money on me.

The police started searching everybody in the room. We stood there waiting our turn.

Then the police sergeant in command came up to us. I could have laughed out loud. The sergeant and I were old friends. We had enjoyed fifty drinks together in different speakeasies. He caught my eye.

"Pass these people. They're O. K.," he told his men.

That was a close shave. Several of the crowd who had flasks were arrested. But we were allowed to finish our dinner in peace.

Before we left, the manager of the inn, who had not been arrested, told us that "the house had been tipped" that the raid was coming, and all their liquor had been removed from the premises in time.

"But the cops found enough flasks on the guests to make a showing in the papers," he laughed.

At last all the cargo on the *Dawn* was sold.

I ordered the schooner taken south to Settlement Point in the Bahamas, with the intention of buying another cargo, and I took the next train to Florida. Settlement Point is just a little village in the westerly group of the islands known as the Grand Bahamas. It is about sixty-five miles from Jupiter Inlet, Florida. The only way to get across is to go to Jupiter or Palm Beach, and take passage on some little gasoline cruiser going over for a load of liquor. That didn't mean a long wait, for I found Palm Beach swimming in liquor, and the supply never was allowed to get low.

A man they called "Pete" agreed to take me over to Settlement Point in his new forty-foot cabin cruiser, the *Rattlesnake*. We left Palm Beach at ten o'clock that night and reached Settlement Point just before day-break.

The town consisted of five liquor dealers and some three hundred other human beings, mostly colored. There was no hotel. Mr. Bowes, the British Commissioner, very decently put me up with a bed at his house.

There was a man who certainly was the absolute monarch of his domain. He was collector of customs, magistrate, registrar of births, deaths and marriages, port health officer, community doctor; anything you needed in the way of an official.

I waited there as his guest for two weeks, spending

most of my time eating and drinking. Every morning I looked for the *Dawn* offshore. But the schooner never came.

I began to worry. The nearest spot I could get in touch with my Halifax associates was Nassau. Captain Dick offered to take me from Settlement Point to Nassau in the cabin cruiser *Black Hawk*. That was the roughest trip I ever made in a small craft. We crossed Providence Channel and the Little Bahamas Banks. For hours I had all the tossing around, pitching, rolling and discomfort even a sailor could imagine. And we can imagine plenty.

We reached Nassau at last, and I cabled Halifax. My associates cabled back that the *Dawn* had gone there instead of heading for the Bahamas.

I rushed back to Nova Scotia by train and boat. And there I made up my mind to buy a vessel of my own. This business was big. I had reasoned it out that I could handle it on the high seas without breaking any law. I told myself I might as well get these fat profits out of it as the next man.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DOUBLE CROSS

I have unpleasant experiences as a rum runner and learn how it feels to be betrayed by your partners.

I LEARNED that the schooner *Madeline D.* was on the market. There was as sweet a craft as you could ask to see. She had been the *Sachem*, built for a trans-Atlantic schooner race which she won in the late 'nineties. I fell in love with her from the first moment I saw her. Her lines were a dream.

There was curious report current about her. Some men said she was a "jinx ship." I put it down to sailors' gossip.

After some negotiations I arranged to buy her.

Then the trouble started. My partners became angry because I did not buy a vessel they owned, so that they could make a profit both ways. We dissolved partnership. By the time the lawyers "straightened things out" I had only a half-share in the *Madeline D.*

I went ahead making arrangements with some Halifax business men to finance another cargo of liquor. But

the earliest and hardest winter in Nova Scotia history set in, and the schooner became frozen in at North Sydney. That ended any chance to take her out until spring.

I turned all my attention until then to the gypsum mine in Newfoundland in which I was still a part owner. That business carried me back to New York once more. On that business I met a wealthy New Yorker. He was a yachtsman, a financier and a United States official. He became interested in my gypsum mine, and finally bought a part interest in it.

While I was in New York in the early part of that summer of 1923, I met a deep-sea diver named Berge who had invented a diving apparatus that would enable a man to pick mother-of-pearl shell off the bottom of the sea at depths the average diver could never reach.

Berge had obtained some backing from a group headed by the same yachtsman-financier who had bought a part interest in my gypsum mine. They wanted a suitable vessel from which to work.

We all got together in some negotiations that ended in an agreement that I was to have a share of the profits in return for putting my share of the *Madeline D.* into the venture. The work of going after the mother-of-pearl shell was not to start until autumn. In the meantime Berge induced me to try a little deep-sea liquor salvage.

A sixty-ton schooner, a beautiful craft only eight months old, had been sunk about fifteen miles east of Cape Charles, at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay, in a collision with one of the cutters of the United States Coast Guard. That schooner was carrying a cargo of eighteen hundred cases of genuine old American rye whisky when she sank. At that time, in the state of the liquor market, it was worth almost its weight in gold.

After many discussions, we decided I was to bring the *Madeline D.* south, and we would put the diving apparatus aboard with a skilled diver, and salve this liquor.

We lost a lot of time getting equipped with the necessary stores and the diving apparatus. By the time we arrived off the Virginia Capes, bad weather set in. We fought it a while, with everything I had learned dredging in a forty-foot surf off the West Coast of Africa, but the weather grew too much for us. Regretfully we had to give it up and sail back to New York.

We tied up the *Madeline D.* at the bulkhead at Staten Island. The third or fourth night we were there, I was hailed from the quay-side about one o'clock in the morning. I went up on deck in my pajamas. There on the wharf was a man I had known slightly in New York as "Matt," and a Chinaman.

"I've got a big proposition for you, Jack," said Matt.

"Come aboard," I told him.

Matt and the Chinaman came aboard, went down into the cabin with me, and the Chinaman produced a stone bottle of what he told me proudly was "real Chinese whisky." We had a few drinks. It was the worst stuff I ever tasted.

"What's your proposition?" I asked Matt.

"There are thirty Chinese waiting in Havana for a chance to slip into the United States," he said. "It's thirty thousand dollars for you if you want to go down there and bring them back."

I was pretty hard up at this time. But I refused that.

And I was bitterly disappointed at the outcome of the effort to salvage that sunken whisky off the Virginia Capes.

The same New Yorker who had bought a part interest in my gypsum mine had helped to finance this expedition. Now he started negotiations to buy the *Madeline D.*

I remained in New York several days, fully expecting to start for Halifax any day to arrange for the transfer of the schooner. Then early one morning, while these negotiations were under way, I went to this wealthy man's apartment. His man admitted me. His master was out, he said, but he expected him to return soon.

Waiting for him to return, I observed that the New Yorker had not slept in his bed. Then I saw a telegram on the table.

I was becoming a little uneasy about this man, anyway. The message in that telegram showed me that I had plenty of cause for uneasiness. From it I learned that the New Yorker had used the canceled checks he had given me for a share in the gypsum mine to convince my Halifax associates that the *Madeline D.* was in debt and was going to be seized in New York. He had told them, which was true, that I had mortgaged my share in the vessel while I was negotiating with the deep-sea diver and his associate for that Chesapeake Bay salvage job. So when he had convinced them by showing them his canceled gypsum mine-checks that the schooner was in debt and about to be seized, they sold him the vessel for the amount of the mortgage on her.

I was beautifully frozen out. The *Madeline D.* had been stolen from me completely.

I suppose there may be a melancholy sort of pride in losing your shirt to a gentleman in high places. But you miss your shirt just as much as if a rough-neck took it—especially when it is your only shirt. And the *Madeline D.* was my only ship.

I waited until the wealthy New Yorker came home.

We had a somewhat hectic interview, which he tried to dodge. But the satisfaction I got out of that interview was poor pay for the loss of my share of the ship.

There is a certain amount of sardonic humor in the fact that a New York liquor dealer Broadway knows as "Bill" was so incensed over what he called "the raw deal" I got, that he reported this United States official to the United States authorities at New York. But that was all that ever came of it.

The very next day after I learned I had lost my share in the *Madeline D.*, I received a request to meet another New York man in his most imposing down-town office. I went to see him. He took me to the headquarters of an American liquor-running syndicate in another imposing office.

"We've been looking you up, Captain Randell," the spokesman for the syndicate told me. He looked and acted like the president of a bank. "We know all about you," he continued. "Would you be interested in five hundred dollars a month and a five-thousand-dollar bonus to go to St. John's, Newfoundland, charter a steamer for us, and take a cargo of sixteen thousand cases of liquor from St. John's to a position off New York?"

The mining business had come to a dead halt. I took him on.

I went north to Sydney and chartered the steamship *Dieuze*. She was about one thousand tons dead-weight. I took her into St. John's. There we loaded the sixteen thousand cases of liquor aboard, finishing the job about four o'clock one Saturday afternoon.

A heavy gale was blowing out of the northeast, and thick snow was falling. The plan had been to leave the minute we were loaded. I had spoken to the Customs officials, and very courteously they had kept their office open all Saturday afternoon so we could leave at once.

A man named Joe was in charge of buying the liquor cargo for the syndicate. Just as soon as we had cleared at the Customs, Joe came aboard the *Dieuze* looking for me.

"Captain Randell, how soon can you leave port?" he demanded.

By now the northeast gale was blowing heavier than ever, a rough sea had risen, and the snow was so thick you couldn't see the stern from the bow.

"It's impossible for us to leave in this gale," I told him. "It's blowing dead on shore. The engines have such low power that they can't possibly steam against a gale like that. I think it will blow itself out in about twenty-four hours, though."

"Hell!" Joe said to me. "I have my bag packed all ready to jump aboard."

"You're not going with us, are you?" I asked in surprise. My orders had nothing like that in them.

"Certainly I'm going with you," he snapped.

He went out. A few moments later the liquor agent who had sold the syndicate the cargo came in to see me and asked if he could speak to me in strict privacy.

I closed the door and locked it. Evidently there was something developing that was worth learning more about.

"Captain Randell, how well do you know your owners?" asked the liquor agent, after I had closed the door. "Are they a decent lot of fellows?"

"As far as the average rum runners are concerned, they seemed to be a fairly decent crowd. Why?"

"So far," he said, "they have paid me only two thousand dollars down on this hundred-and-seventy-thousand-dollar cargo. And this man Joe who represents your owners as agent tells me there is no chance that he can pay me the balance until Monday."

I did some hard, heavy, fast thinking. Here it was Saturday afternoon, and Joe was clamoring to sail right now, and to come with us. Distinctly this did not look so good.

"I am not going to sail to-day, and I certainly am going to investigate this business clear through to the bottom," I assured the liquor agent.

"I think it is a good idea," he said. And then he added some details that made me more suspicious.

I wasn't going to have my name mixed up in any crookedness there in St. John's, which was like home to me.

The liquor agent went ashore. Presently, before I was quite ready to go ashore myself, the liquor agent was back on board again.

"Joe now tells me that you are a partner in this proposition, Captain Randell," he said. "He tells me further that the money for the balance due on the liquor will be along Monday morning, and that you'll guarantee it personally."

"You come ashore with me right now," I told him. I took him to the office of a prominent St. John's merchant I knew well.

"I want you as a witness to my statement to this liquor agent," I told the merchant. Then I said formally: "Listen carefully to what I have to say. I do not know these people who are buying this liquor to the point where I can vouch for them. I have no connection with them at all, except as master of the steamship *Dieuze*. If you let that cargo be taken away from St. John's before you get paid for it, then you can not place any blame on me. My personal advice to you is to call the sheriff."

For I knew now that Joe and his gunmen were going to try to steal that cargo of liquor, getting it away from St. John's with only a two-thousand-dollar payment on it. I told the liquor agent how Joe had suddenly and unexpectedly announced he was going to sail on the *Dieuze*. I told him about the gunmen.

The liquor agent called the sheriff. The vessel was held. On Tuesday the cargo was taken ashore again.

Raging like a mad dog, Joe went ashore and bought part of a cargo from another liquor agent. Then we took on some more liquor for another man whose vessel had grounded coming into port a few days before. Now we had some fourteen thousand cases destined for Rum Row.

Three of that crowd aboard had been sent by the syndicate from New York. Two were the "Kike" and the "Wop," the gunmen. The third was the supercargo. He was a young Jew they called "Izzy." He was supposed to be as tough as the Kike and the Wop combined. Needless to say, after his plot to steal the cargo was balked, Joe decided not to sail with us. He returned to New York by train.

That business straightened up, we steamed out to sea.

We hadn't been at sea twenty-four hours before the crew had rechristened the *Dieuze*. They named her the "Old Dizzy."

I had seen many ships in my time, but none like her. She had been built on the Pacific Coast for the French Government. She was the ugliest thing that ever floated. She worked open and shut like a concertina. You had to be very careful not to get your fingers in between the open spaces in any of the bulkheads or the doors, or they were sure to get nipped when she squeezed shut as she rolled and pitched.

And the crew was as unique as the *Old Dizzy* herself. It was a mixed crowd that could be kept under control only by fist and marlinspike and gun. They had to be kept away from the liquor.

Before the end of the first day at sea the Kike and the Wop were so seasick that their "rods," as they called their pistols, were as much use to them as pea-shooters. But presently they got back on their feet. They would sit for hours with Izzy, swapping lies about their shooting-scrapes and their love-affairs. They made Boccaccio and Margaret of Navarre look like amateurs. Rabelais could have learned a lot from them.

We steamed south to a point some twenty-five miles south of Nantucket Island and waited there for the first boat to come out. In ten days we unloaded six thousand cases into all kinds of craft, from power schooners to gasoline launches. Then we went down to a position off Montauk Point, Long Island. That was the beginning

of Rum Row, which stretched from the eastern point of Long Island clear to Atlantic City. It was a strange sight. In Rum Row were steamers of all nationalities, two- and three-masted schooners, and even yachts of the finest class afloat. There was many a yacht owner in those days who made enough out of liquor in one year to keep his yacht for life.

We discharged more cargo there. Then I got orders to go alongside a three-masted schooner, take off what remained of her cargo, and allow her to go home. The orders were also to take on board her a supercargo, a man named Ross. We transferred her two thousand cases of Canadian Club Rye aboard the old *Dieuze*, stacked it on our after-deck, and went back to our old position off Nantucket Island.

This supercargo Ross was unique. I could foresee trouble with him from the start. He had studied too many moving-picture villains. He had their scowl and sarcastic sneer down to perfection. He wanted the world to know that here was a bad man. He was of only medium height and very ordinary build. But he would swank around the *Old Dizzy* with a holstered six-shooter slapping against his hip, scowling and sneering at anything in sight. He would walk the deck for hours, trying to impress us with his toughness.

Two days after we took on the deck cargo from the

schooner, a southeast gale sprang up. We tried to heave up the anchor. It couldn't be done. So I started both engines slow ahead and tried to help take the weight off the cable. But the *Old Dizzy* simply wasn't having any. She just took a sheer and snapped the cable clean.

It was blowing far too heavily to keep her head on to the sea. She fell off broadside on. She gave two or three terrific rolls—and eight hundred cases of liquor shot over the rail.

Nantucket islanders got free liquor. I got a free fight. For the firemen on the *Old Dizzy* had managed to steal a case in the excitement. That night they opened it. By morning they were nearly all fighting drunk. The battle started. I had to go below and straighten out a Black Gang that had become mostly maniacs. And I had to do it with bare fists. I noticed the Kike and the Wop were conspicuous by their absence when the fighting started.

The ringleader in the Black Gang was a Newfoundland Irishman, and he was hard to handle. But at last I got in a right to his jaw, and by the time he came to, I had him handcuffed to the rail of the bridge deck, just opposite the door of my room. Presently he regained consciousness, and he taught me some perfectly new possibilities of the English language. Then after a while he became intimately personal in his remarks,

and began to tell me what he would do to me as soon as he got unshackled.

I went into my room and came out with my pistol and a bottle of whisky. Back in the South African War I had become a pretty fair pistol-shot, and I had kept up practise as often as I could. I stood the bottle of whisky just beyond his reach.

"So you'll do all that to me when you get loose, will you?" I said. "All right. I'm going to take off your handcuffs presently, and you can help yourself to anything you want. But just now, suppose you watch that whisky bottle. And remember, I'm keeping this pistol where I can reach it."

Then I backed away some distance and shot the top off the bottle of whisky.

That quieted him. A few hours later the liquor went dead in him, and he began to plead and beg and promise good behavior. I turned him loose.

Next morning I heard a series of crashes and shouts from the saloon. I headed below to see what new troubles were brewing. I found them.

Ross, the movie-villain supercargo from the schooner, was having a little entertainment out of Joe, the cook, with the Kike and the Wop as an admiring audience. Joe was a French Canadian who had fought in France with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and had been

badly shell-shocked. On top of that he was naturally very nervous.

The saloon floor was all strewn with broken crockery, fragments of food and spilled coffee.

"What's all this?" I demanded.

I learned quickly from Joe. For the past hour Ross had sat there ordering breakfast after breakfast. Each time Joe came into the saloon with a fresh breakfast on a tray, there was Ross sitting with his revolver pointed at Joe.

"Drop it, Joe!" he would yell at the top of his voice. Naturally Joe would drop everything. Ross and the Kike and the Wop were hugely amused.

"Captain, he tell me fo' to do it!" Joe cried in terror as he saw me in the doorway. "I can't help, me, dat feller been damn' fool! He got a gun!"

Joe was a nervous wreck. I went back to my quarters, and I got a gun. I went below to the saloon again.

"Come out on deck, you damned rats," I told Ross and the Kike and the Wop.

They took a look at my revolver, and they came.

"Mind what you do with your hands, too," I told them.

They made no move to draw their weapons.

I marched them up on deck. If a shooting exhibition was good for the fireman, it ought to be good enough

for them, I figured. I had a sailor get two quarts of liquor from my room and stand them up on the deck some distance away. I smashed them with two shots.

"Now," I said to the three, "I've got four shots left in this gun if you want to start something. This is your chance. Hop to it. You're going to behave yourselves on this ship, or you're going over the side with a slice-bar tied to your feet."

They didn't accept the invitation. After that, they behaved.

The weather that winter was terrible. Gale followed gale. Before spring came, hundreds of anchors were left on the bottom all along Rum Row. It was a hard winter for the rum fleet. Now and then, when the weather would clear for a brief time, Captain Paul Myra, master of the three-masted schooner *Hazel Myra*, would come over, tie up astern of the *Old Dizzy*, and visit me. He told me of one Rum Row murder that never got into the newspapers.

He was lying at anchor about a quarter of a mile astern of another Rum Row vessel when one of his men called his attention to the body of a man floating past. They put out in their dory and brought the body aboard the *Hazel Myra*. It was still warm, but the man was dead. They knew he had come from the schooner anchored ahead of them, and they knew from his clothes

and appearance that he wasn't one of the crew. They had seen a large motor-boat come alongside the schooner, and it was obvious that the man had been killed and callously dropped overboard. They wrote down a description of the man, and then gave him a proper burial at sea. Next time that schooner came out, she drew up alongside the *Hazel Myra*. Captain Paul Myra walked over to the rail.

"What did you fellows want to kill that man for, night before last?" he asked the two men in charge.

At first they were scared stiff. They offered Paul a thousand dollars to keep his mouth shut.

"Keep your thousand and go to hell with it," he told them. "I'm reporting the whole case to the authorities."

Then, from offering bribery, they turned ferocious.

"We know who you are and all about you," they told Paul, cursing him horribly. "You'll keep your damned mouth shut or we'll get you. If we don't get a chance to take you for a ride ourselves, we've got the guys who will."

Paul let it drop.

Paul came aboard the *Old Dizzy* one night with two of his men and had supper with me. After supper he bought a case of beer out of our cargo, and proceeded to make all my men tight. It was mistaken hospitality. It ended in a free-for-all fight in my forecastle.

And right in the middle of the fight a strong north-wester blew up.

Paul and his men had to get back aboard their schooner in a dory, in a sea so rough that nobody but Nova Scotia men would have dared to tackle it. We lowered them astern with about three hundred fathoms of deep-sea lead-line. They had only just reached the *Hazel Myra* when the line that held the schooner to the *Old Dizzy* snapped under a sudden strain.

They had to put their canvas on her, get under way, and reef their sail in faster time than I ever saw it done before, to keep from drifting down on another steamer anchored dead to leeward. Had they struck her they would have had small chance of living.

And then Ross, my prize supercargo, got hold of some more liquor and began making war-talk.

One of my men came and told me. I went down into the saloon with my gun in my pocket. The sarcastic supercargo was telling a fascinated audience how this man "got his" and that man "got his," and how many men he had "bumped off" in his time. All of which he varied by tales of what he could do with the weapon he called variously a gun, a gat and a rod.

It was time for strong measures.

"If a Chinaman painted two eyes on a wall, you'd be afraid to shoot at 'em, you damned little rat," I told

him in front of his audience. "If you saw me coming for you with a gun in my hand, you'd faint. Do I have to spank you with your own gun, or will you shut up and behave?"

"I'll behave," he promised. And he really did.

The winter passed. Every month some one coming out in one of the boats to the *Old Dizzy* would bring me a duplicate deposit slip from a certain bank to show me my pay had been deposited to my credit ashore. I put them all safely away. We discharged the last of our cargo, and steamed for Halifax, Nova Scotia.

And the day I stepped ashore, I learned that every one of those duplicate deposit slips was a forgery! I had put in that whole winter for nothing, not a cent had been deposited to my credit. Those crooks, after I blocked their plan to steal that liquor cargo at St. John's, Newfoundland, had no more intention of giving me a penny than they had of giving me the cargo. I was so mad I could have put them all in the Federal Penitentiary at Atlanta, cheerfully. But what made me madder was to discover that they had used my name and connections in their effort to get that sixteen-thousand-case cargo out to sea without paying for it, after we got it loaded. Then it dawned on me there was a way I could get back at them where it would hurt them most—in their pocketbook.

CHAPTER XV

FIGHTING THE JINX

Further discouragements of the liquor trade—Rum running in a fated ship.

I WENT down to New York and looked up the "Belt-Buckle Kid."

He had won that monniker from the article of personal adornment that was the pride of his life. He was one of the most prominent and successful liquor dealers in New York at the time, handling from five thousand to ten thousand cases a month. Money simply poured into his bank accounts. He had to spend it on something to prove to himself that he had it to spend.

So he had a famous jeweler make him this belt buckle. It was the biggest piece of platinum I ever saw. It was set with his monogram in diamonds. And as he boasted, there wasn't a diamond in the lot that cost him less than a thousand dollars.

I knew that he had virtually closed arrangements to take all the liquor he could sell from that gang of crooks

that had cheated me out of my pay for that winter's work on the old *Dieuze*. I told him the whole story, including their attempt to use me as a catspaw in stealing that sixteen-thousand-case cargo.

"That's enough for me," he said. "I don't want to do business with that kind of cattle."

He broke off his negotiations with them.

Two days later I received a visitor. Broadway knew him merely as "Mike."

"I'm doing you a favor, Randell," he said. "I don't know what time the next train leaves for anywhere outside New York, but you'd better take it. When you spoiled the syndicate's play for that cargo on the *Dieuze* and they made you work all winter for nothing, that was only the start of it. Now you've spoiled their deal with the Belt-Buckle Kid. They're goin' to take you for a ride—get me?"

I "got him." The phrase "take you for a ride" was newer in America then than it is now. But it meant just the same thing: that they were out to kill me. The way I felt about how they had cheated me, just then, made the prospect of a scrap look good.

"You go back to whoever sent you," I told Mike. "Look here——" I reached into my pocket and pulled out my revolver. "Tell those crooks you saw me with a gun. Tell them I'll welcome a chance to shoot it out

with any of them or all of them. They know whether I can use it or not."

"You're a fool to stick around New York," said Mike, and then he left.

I stayed in New York City more than a month after that. I carried the gun, too. Nobody molested me.

I went back to the problem of financing my gypsum mine.

All around New York were men who knew I had been in the liquor game, and that I could be trusted. I had the entrée into hundreds of places, from the small speakeasy to the big cabaret. I think there were very few men, in the liquor business or out of it, who knew New York as I knew it in those days.

Ship-brokers and other maritime men knew me pretty well, too. I picked up quite a number of comfortable fees inspecting vessels and acting as broker in buying and selling them. Many craft were changing hands all the time in the liquor business.

Then I learned that the *Madeline D.*, my old schooner, was at Staten Island and was for sale again. I loved that vessel like a child. She had won her place in my heart simply because she was like a living thing, and the fastest craft in the shape of a schooner on any ocean.

The very day I learned she was for sale I went for luncheon to a big New York restaurant where I knew

I could get an excellent Scotch and soda. It was late in December, 1926.

It is curious, the effect casual contacts have on our lives. Entering that one restaurant out of all New York proved to be the direct cause of my going back to Rum Row again. In the middle of the meal a man came up to my table and introduced himself to me. His name was familiar. In turn, he introduced me to two of his friends.

"We are looking for a fast schooner to carry liquor," one of them told me. "Do you know of any likely craft around Nova Scotia?"

"You don't need to go that far," I told him. "I know of one right here in New York."

We went over to Staten Island and inspected the *Madeline D.* They liked her. Within twenty-four hours they had bought and paid for her. I visited their offices by appointment, to get my fee as broker for arranging the sale.

"We would like to have you go on that schooner as skipper for us," the spokesman of the pair said. "We'll pay you five hundred dollars a month, and a bonus every six months."

That pay, plus the bonus, was excellent. The excitement of the game was a lure. But down in my heart I knew really that the chief thing I wanted was to stand

on that schooner's deck again and be in command of her. She was the sweetest-sailing thing afloat.

I agreed to go in with them. This time I made arrangements that would guarantee I wouldn't be cheated by forged duplicate bank deposit slips.

When the deal was completed, I got my orders from the owners.

"We've arranged for a load of liquor at St. John's, Newfoundland," said the man they called the "Big Shot," who was the boss of this outfit. "Make the best time you can, going up there, get it and get back to Rum Row. We'll do the peddling here in New York."

"The season is too late for a trip to Newfoundland in that type of craft from New York," I protested. "That's a schooner. It isn't a steamship or an ice-breaker. We'll have to fight weather we can't handle, and we'll stand a fine chance of being frozen into the ice for the winter."

But it was no use arguing with them. They knew as much about a schooner and Newfoundland winter weather as I knew about raising chickens—probably less. And it was their own money they were spending. The upshot of it was that I started for St. John's late in December, with an engine that wouldn't turn over. The only cheerful detail was that I had a good crew. I don't mean good from a sky-pilot's point of view, but good

from the view-point of a skipper who had rough weather to fight in a small craft. Those men were real sailors.

We made good time the first two days out of New York. Then the wind hauled off from the north and the *Madeline D.* really started to move. Before it grew dark that night we had to take in the jib and put it into the strait-jacket. The foresail, the jumbo and the storm trysail were new and we kept them on the job and let her go. I have no way of knowing accurately what speed she made that night, but I will always believe it was somewhere between nineteen and twenty knots.

Lord, how that schooner could sail! The year before, she had started at Nantucket Lightship and had made the Ambrose Channel Lightship in less than twelve hours, averaging around seventeen knots. Those two points, roughly, are one hundred and ninety-six miles apart. Watching her race along that night I laughed about the stories that she was a "jinx" ship.

About midnight I went below for some sleep. About one o'clock in the morning, my shoulder was shaken. It was the mate awakening me.

"It's blowing so hard I don't think she can stand a whole foresail, sir," he said.

"Keep her off a few points and ease her," I told him. "I'm coming top-side."

By the time I got on deck it was blowing hard. And though the water was comparatively smooth, we were beginning to ice up all over. That meant real trouble.

"Take in the foresail," I ordered.

The watch leaped to the job, but by now the halyards were sheathed in ice. We had a terrific lot of trouble getting that foresail down—and then, just as we were getting it down at last, it burst. It was a new sail and hadn't been used before. But some mildewed spots had developed in it, the wind tore through them like a fist going through wet paper, and it ripped clean up to the head. We had a battle with it, but we got it tied up at last, and hove to under a storm trysail and jumbo. The little dear reached along like a duck.

Then the wind rose to a whole gale. And the temperature dropped nearly to zero. The schooner had become dangerous from her rapidly increasing load of ice. She began to lumber along.

For a couple of hours, working with marlinspikes and the backs of axes we chopped and hammered off the ice as much as we could. But it was no use. The ice was forming on her faster than we could break it off. We had to run for the Gulf Stream to save our lives.

Luckily we hadn't far to go to reach the warm water. We got rid of our ice soon after that, but our troubles had only started. Some of her seams began to open. A

heavy sea was running. She began taking in water so fast that the mate's watch, which should have been below, had to go to work pumping ship. They were a long time at it. Far longer than they should have been. I grew worried.

"Sound the well," I ordered the mate.

"Two feet of water in the hold, sir," he reported a few minutes later.

There was nothing else to it. We must turn and run like hell for Bermuda.

It's one thing to stand on the poop of a big sailing ship or the bridge of a big steamer, and watch huge combers come racing after you.

It's another thing to stand on the deck of a small schooner, only five feet above the surface of the ocean, and watch the big seas come rolling down. Especially when you know that the schooner is taking in water through opening seams.

At first I hardly knew what to make of her. It looked as though we might be fighting for our lives in the dories inside of an hour. And in those winter seas it would be a terrible fight. But after I had watched her behavior closely for half an hour I began to think there was less need to worry. She might have water in her hold, but she was cutting through the seas like a knife.

We ran under bare poles for several hours. Then the big seas began to threaten us over the stern.

"Set the storm trysail in place of the foresail," I ordered the mate. It worked. The seas couldn't catch her after that. The way she traveled, if that gale had kept up, we would have reached Bermuda in double quick time. But we weren't due to have that much luck.

The wind died out. In less than twenty-four hours we were in the center of a dead calm. But if the gale had stopped, our leak had not. That leak was bad. I had to keep one pump going all the time. That was a hard strain on the men.

Taking advantage of the little benefit the calm gave us, we unbent the foresail, took it down into the cabin, dried it and repaired it. All that time the pumps kept clanking away.

Then a steamer hove in sight over the horizon. She saw us there under bare poles, swerved over to us, and asked us by signal flags if we wanted assistance. I hoisted the international negative which means "No." The steamer went on its way.

That night a southeaster blew up. It didn't help us much, but by noon the next day it had veered around to north-northwest. And again we went off for Bermuda. The wind grew so heavy that for four hours we

scudded along under bare poles. Then I had the storm trysail hoisted again. The leak had not increased. That made me feel a lot less uneasy.

We made a good run this time. Next day by noon we were only one hundred and thirty miles from St. Georges, one of the seaports of the Bermudas. Then the wind slackened and grew light once more.

Next afternoon by three o'clock we were about ten miles off St. Davids. A tug-boat came puffing out toward us.

"Want me to tow you in?" her captain called when he got alongside.

"How much?" I called back.

"One hundred pounds sterling," he shouted.

"Don't you want the schooner and the cargo thrown in too?" I asked him. "Who the hell do you think we are? A lot of bloody yachtsmen?"

He began to laugh.

"Well, seeing as you aren't millionaires, I'll do the job for twenty-five pounds," he offered.

I took him on.

In two hours we were at anchor in the harbor at St. Georges. My crew were all pretty well worn out. They had been at the pumps for days.

But we still had plenty of pumping to do. We went to the job determined to finish it this time. By mid-

night we had the schooner completely dried out, working both pumps.

We were hungry, but we needed sleep more than we needed food. We all went to bed.

And at four o'clock in the morning the water woke me up. It was two feet deep over the cabin floor. Thank the Lord, that seam waited until we got into port before it really opened!

We went to the pumps again. Again we got her dried out. Then next day we were towed to Hamilton where I made arrangements for dry-docking her. I got in touch with my owners by cable, and they authorized the necessary repairs. The high cost of everything in Bermuda was staggering. By the time we were ready for sea again, the repairs to the *Madeline D.* had cost more than I had paid for the whole schooner two years earlier.

The job took six weeks. When it was finished I reported to the owners and got my orders by cable. We loaded at Bermuda with about twenty-five hundred cases of liquor and sailed north, bound for Rum Row, just off Atlantic City.

The trip north was without incident. We cast anchor and sold five hundred cases over the rail at around fifty dollars a case. But that luck was too good to last.

It was borne in on me that when sailors said that the

Madeline D. had become a jinx ship, they knew what they were talking about.

The United States Coast Guard cutters suddenly became more active. Time after time they chased us offshore. They scared away the cabin cruisers that had been coming out for the liquor.

Then a sudden heavy squall swooped down on us and hit us. It carried away our fore-gaff. We crawled along back and forth for several days. But as day followed day, water and provisions both became short.

That meant we must start the long trip home. No boats would come out to give us water and food. And the minute we stuck our bow inside the three-mile limit, there was a Coast Guard cutter waiting to grab us. Then the weather turned very bad.

"We'll head back to Bermuda for supplies," I told the mate.

We were working south toward Cape Hatteras about eight o'clock one morning when the big United States Coast Guard cutter *Menhasset* came racing out after us and hove to alongside.

"Where are you from and where are you bound?" her captain called at me through a megaphone.

"We're from the north and we're bound south," I megaphoned back.

"Well," he megaphoned heatedly, "since you're so

damned fresh about it, I guess we'll come along with you."

"Have you got plenty of coal?" I called to him.

"It's none of your damned business, but we have. Why?" he answered.

"You'll need it if you're coming with us," I told him, laughing. "This craft travels."

"We're from Missouri. You've got to show us," he said.

"By the way," I called to him, "we're short of water. Will you exchange twenty gallons of water for twenty gallons of whisky?"

"Nothing doing," said the cutter captain.

"Then you won't mind us going on ahead of you if the wind freshens, will you?" I asked him. "We're anxious to get somewhere where we *can* get some water."

"You'll go some to get away from us!" he boasted. "We'll stay with you through hell and come out on the other side."

That ended the exchange of compliments.

There was very little wind, and we were making only about four knots. The cutter was keeping pace with us easily. But about three hours later the wind freshened. By noon we were making a clean ten knots, with the wind increasing in strength all the time. About

two o'clock that afternoon, we got just the kind of wind the *Madeline D.* loved.

"Good-by," was the signal flag I hoisted.

The cutter's engine-room bells jangled as her captain on the bridge signaled for more speed. But the wind grew stronger. I eased our sheets a couple of points.

By four o'clock that afternoon the cutter was just a smudge of smoke on the horizon, astern. He was making twelve knots. We were making sixteen.

I often wondered how her captain felt about it. It was months afterward I heard he reported me as having two powerful engines and making twenty knots with ease!

CHAPTER XVI

WHISKY FOR WATER

I become willing to exchange any amount of whisky for a few gallons of water—The jinx wins and I lose my ship after serious misadventures.

I DROVE on south toward the Bahamas, intending to make Nassau in distress. And then the wind veered around and came from the south!

Our water supply was down to an allowance of one full cup a day for each of us. We had two thousand cases of liquor aboard, but whisky doesn't quench thirst.

There was nothing for me to do but make for the coast of Florida.

We got into a position about twelve miles off Mosquito Inlet on the Florida coast when the wind began to drop, and then died down to a dead calm. I had to drop the anchor to keep from drifting helplessly on the beach.

Just after we dropped anchor, a steamship came in sight on a course that brought her very close to us.

I put up distress signals. She came alongside. She was a Japanese; one of those "Maru" ships of the Osaka Shosen Kaisha. I offered to trade a case of Scotch whisky for a cask of water and fifty pounds of rice. The Japanese captain agreed. But we had nothing left now aboard the *Madeline D.* to eat with the rice, and a couple of days of boiled rice three times a day left us rather fed up with the diet of the Orient.

The dead calm continued. Then an American steamer came alongside. Again I hoisted distress signals.

"What can I do for you?" asked the American captain.

I explained our plight to him.

"Will you trade us some white men's provisions for some whisky?" I asked him.

"I'll give you the provisions, but I don't want your whisky," said the captain. At his orders, several cases of canned goods, some potatoes, onions, bread and water were put aboard us. I thanked him. I renewed the offer of some whisky in payment.

"No, thanks," he said, starting forward.

As soon as he turned the corner of the deck-house and was out of sight, his chief engineer and his chief steward threw a heaving line over to us and had a case of Scotch whisky snaked up aboard their ship in a couple of seconds.

Shortly after the American steamer had gone on its way, the breeze sprang up. We hove up our anchor and headed south. Two days later we sighted Settlement Point in the Grand Bahamas. We entered port in distress. Casting anchor, I went ashore and reported the *Madeline D.* in distress to the British authorities at Nassau by wireless. I asked permission to remain there until stores could be sent over to us from Nassau. It was granted.

Meanwhile the people at Settlement Point were uncommonly kind to us. We obtained a fine supply of fresh provisions from them—pigs, chickens, eggs, vegetables and fruits. Every one of us was thankful for a square meal and plenty of fresh water to wash it down.

It looked as though the sun was shining through the clouds at last. I began to hope that the jinx was going to release its grip.

It was just before dark when I was rowed out to the *Madeline D.* With the immediate problems of food and water off my mind, I was giving more attention to our anchorage. It was not so good. We were anchored in an open roadstead. I saw that the minute the wind started to blow fresh from the northwest, we would have to heave up anchor and get under way and be smart about it. It would be one of those fast jobs where I would need all hands.

I vaulted over the rail to the deck with that on my mind—and found myself in the middle of a mob of maniacs. The whole crew was raving drunk.

The first thing I took in after that was the sight of William, an Irish Newfoundlander, dashing down the deck toward me, with a long knife in his hand. His hair was a matted mass. His eyes were insane. He looked like one of those pictures you see of one of the ancient buccaneers of the Spanish Main, boarding a treasure-ship.

"I swore I'd kill the first —— that tried to come aboard!" he roared at the top of his voice.

He leaped at me, his knife flashing up in the air.

I had barely time to set myself for the attack.

Just as he stabbed at me, I managed to grab the wrist of his knife hand. The point of the blade drove down with all the strength he had. It ripped the shoulder of my coat.

Then the maniac tried to sink his teeth in my neck.

I hunched up a shoulder to guard my neck, and concentrated on that knife. I got a grip with both hands on his wrist, and I bore down and twisted with every ounce I had in me. I think it would have cracked the bone in his arm if we hadn't both overbalanced and crashed to the deck. The knife fell out of his fingers as we landed.

I pulled away from him and leaped to my feet. I grabbed the knife and tossed it over the side. Then he was on top of me like an infuriated wildcat. Kicking with his booted feet, smashing at me with his knees and his elbows, butting at me with his head, and trying to sink his teeth in me, he was swarming all over me.

I got in a couple of blows to his stomach. That stopped him for the second or two I needed to get my balance.

Then, when he rushed me again, I let him have it in the stomach with my right, and in the jaw with my left. He went down, and he stayed down.

I grabbed a coil of light line and trussed him up before he came back to consciousness. Then I got a belay-pin, and started out to investigate.

In the forecandle I found the cook. He was an old Norwegian named Jan I had found homeless on South Street in New York. He was stretched out insensible, bleeding from a deep cut in his head.

Farther aft I found two of the crew lying on the deck, so drunk they couldn't stand on their feet.

Others of the crew were raving drunk and foolish, on deck and below. But they were easy to handle. I waded in among them with the marlinspike and they quieted quickly.

Then it dawned on me that the mate was missing. I

started searching the schooner for him. I found him in the cabin, completely barricaded. William had chased him below with that knife. He had dashed into the cabin, locked the door against William's attack, and piled all the movable furniture in front of it.

It was a sweet outfit.

I got the mate to come out of the cabin, and we returned on deck. William had come back to consciousness now. He was struggling with his bonds and cursing like ten proverbial troopers. I put a few extra knots in the rope and left him where he lay.

I thought at first that they had broken into the liquor cargo. But then I learned from the mate that some Bahama niggers had come alongside in rowboats with jugs of native rum, and the crew had even exchanged their clothing for it. That rum had driven them simply insane.

Next morning I took them ashore before Magistrate Bowes, who was an old friend of mine. He put the fear of God into their hearts, kept the worst of them behind the bars for a day, and sent two policemen on board the *Madeline D.* to keep an eye on the others—but chiefly to prevent those niggers from bringing more rum aboard.

Somehow or other the nigger rum pedlers outwitted the police. By next day they had slipped several jugs

aboard. I was below when I heard rioting starting over my head. I dashed up on deck to find four of the crew fighting.

My mate was standing by, just watching the show, instead of breaking it up.

I dashed at the struggling group, and had just cracked their heads together and got them separated, when I heard the mate shout.

"Look out, Captain!"

I wheeled around just in time. My old friend William, that Newfoundland Irishman, had been let out of jail. He had felt very keenly the indignity of being put in prison, even if it was only for a few hours. He had filled himself with rum, ashore, and had come aboard swearing vengeance.

He was rushing at me now, with an iron pin clutched in one fist. I think the only thing that saved me was that between the rum and what he had been through the day before, William couldn't work fast. At that, I had barely time to grab a belaying-pin, sidestep his rush, and smash him on the arm. The iron pin he was carrying clattered to the deck. Then, when he swung around to rush me with his bare fists, I hit him hard on the chin and he went down.

I dragged him along the deck and handcuffed him to the winch. He lay there unconscious for a while. Then

when he returned to consciousness, he started cursing me so viciously and obscenely that it was impossible to listen to him.

I gagged him and kept him there, gagged and handcuffed, until he sobered up late that day. When I removed the gag he begged me with tears in his eyes to turn him loose and forgive him. I did. He was the best man on the ship after that.

A few days later our stores arrived from Nassau. We stowed them away and started back north to Rum Row.

The weather was simply splendid. With a full-sail breeze from the southeast we were making marvelous time. Twenty-four hours later we had covered two hundred and eighty miles. I thought the jinx surely must have left us.

The wind freshened from south-southeast. By nightfall we had to take in the mainsail and the jib. Then at two o'clock in the morning the wind fell away into a dead calm. A heavy swell started rolling down from the north.

Suddenly the sky was filled with the sound of crashing thunder, and was ripped apart by one of the greatest and most awe-inspiring displays of lightning I have ever seen.

In the midst of that show, the wind came down from the north and blew like fury. The schooner began to

pitch and toss crazily. Then she lay far over on her side. Fighting like the devil, we got the canvas off her and hove to under a double-reefed foresail.

Ten consecutive hours that gale continued to blow from the north. As suddenly as it had started, it died out. Two hours of calm followed. The calm was shattered abruptly by a terrific squall that came roaring out of the south-southeast.

Our foresail fluttered away in ribbons. The foregaff was carried clean away. By hard fighting we set our storm trysail. But that was about all we could do. Gradually the wind backed around to about east-southeast, with a heavy cross sea.

Seas began to pound us from the north, from the south, and from the east. We were east from the Gulf Stream. I knew that if we went west across the stream, we would have mighty small chance of coming through alive. So I did the only thing left. That was to put her head on to the northerly swell. And then while the swell out of the north came tearing over her bows, at the same time the swell from out of the south came smashing over her stern. It was a hellish night.

By daybreak the schooner was a wreck. Sails were gone. Bulwarks were ripped away. Our boats were gone. The seams were opened up around the knight-heads. Aft, everything was smashed off clean at deck

level. The stern itself was opened so badly that I expected she would sink at any moment.

We were working now to save our lives. We lashed her stern together with a new three-and-a-quarter manila hawser, hove it tight with a Spanish windlass, and nailed canvas over the worst of the opened seams. Then as soon as the wind and the sea had moderated a little, we ran across the Gulf Stream and started to work south again.

The jinx had won. I knew when I was licked. It was suicide to try to go any farther north.

I kept her in as close to the land as we possibly could, in case she started leaking with a rush. I expected it any minute. When it started, we would have to beach her to save our lives.

Strangely enough, we coasted straight along Florida to Jupiter Light without seeing a single United States Coast Guard cutter. It was a miracle that we arrived at Nassau without accident. But we did.

I went ashore at Nassau and cabled my owners. I told them the best thing they could do was to repair the *Madeline D.* and sell her. I knew now that the old sailors who had told me she was a jinx ship knew absolutely what they were talking about. Sailors are right when they tell you that you can't fight a jinx or a hoodoo once it settles on a ship.

The owners agreed with me. I landed our liquor cargo in bond, we had the schooner repaired, and then sold her to some Nassau business men.

We got out from under the jinx just in time. The *Madeline D.* ended her career at last by going down in the hurricane of 1927 with a loss of thirty-two lives.

I loved that schooner. But from the time I bought her in 1922 until she was sold at Nassau five years later, she did nothing for me but bring me the name of "Hard Luck" Randell. And the name was no lie. My run of continuous hard luck lasted until she sank.

I went back home for a rest. I thought I was through with the rum-running game. I went back to my efforts to develop that gypsum mine. It kept me busy for a while.

Then in 1927 the Canadian Government sent for me. I was offered the command of the government-chartered ship *St. Ann*, to go north with the Fort Churchill Expedition.

That expedition was under the command of Captain J. E. Bernier, a Canadian and an arctic explorer. The Canadian Government was building a railroad from a point west of Winnipeg to Fort Churchill. At its completion, Canadian grain for Europe will go out by that short route.

The purpose of the expedition was to take dredges

and stores to Fort Churchill for harbor construction. We had to go up around Cape Chudleigh, through the Hudson Straits, and then turn south again and go across Hudson Bay.

It was a dangerous job. We struck bad weather just south of Cape Chudleigh. The dredge wasn't suitable for that sort of voyage, nor was she fitted for it. About one hundred and twenty miles south of Cape Chudleigh and some thirty miles offshore, the dredge sprang a leak and sank. Luckily no lives were lost. I was twenty miles away with the *St. Ann* when it happened.

CHAPTER XVII

AN ARCTIC INTERLUDE

I lead a mining expedition into Hudson Bay.

I HAD returned from the Fort Churchill Expedition. I was casting around to see what came next, when I was visited by a representative of the Lindsley group of Canada. They were wealthy mining men, owners of the Falconbridge, Sherritt Gordon and other mines in northern Manitoba—which it was hoped would become the biggest-producing mines in Canada.

The situation he explained to me, and the proposal he made, were enough to thrill any sea-faring man who loved adventure.

This was the situation:

The Northern Aerial Mineral Exploration Company, which was known in Canada as the N. A. M. E., was planning and preparing an expedition on a magnificent scale, to stake out mining claims in the barren arctic lands of the mineral-bearing section of Canada's north-west territory, far up between the northwest side of

Hudson Bay and the Great Slave Lakes. Canada's newspapers were full of the stories of the project.

The N. A. M. E. had bought a ship that was an old friend of mine. Now she was christened the *Patrick and Michael*. But when I first saw her in Rum Row off New York, she was the *Kirk and Sweeney*. It was aboard her that I had seen the Commodore, my New York bootlegging friend, buy the first liquor cargo I had ever seen sold over the rail. She was the largest two-masted schooner afloat.

The N. A. M. E. had fitted her out lavishly. They crammed her with stores. They bought airplanes and stowed them, knocked down and crated, as a deck load.

Their plan was to take the ship as far north as they could, and there stake out a base from which their aviators were to fly mining prospectors to various points out over that wide waste of mineral-bearing land. The aviators were to set the mining prospectors down wherever they directed, and the prospectors were to stake out mining claims.

It took imagination and enterprise and money to start an expedition like that. The N. A. M. E. crowd had all three.

The only flaw in their project was that they talked too much about it. All Canada knew of their plans.

"There is no reason why the Lindsley group should

not beat them to it," said the Lindsley representative who called on me. "Are you willing to find a suitable ship for us, fit her out, keep absolute secrecy until the day we start, and take command of her?"

This was a job after my own heart. I closed with the Lindsley group.

I bought the *Morso*. She was an ex-rum runner that had been built in Denmark; a three-masted schooner of about four hundred and fifty tons, with auxiliary engines. I put her in shape for the expedition. We were to start from Halifax.

The day we were ready to sail, the *Morso* was loaded down as I have never seen a schooner loaded. The cargo was piled fourteen feet high on her decks.

We carried sufficient supplies for twenty-five men for from two to three years. We carried two seaplanes, in their cases just as they had been shipped across from England.

In that cargo were portable houses, knocked down and crated. One of them, when set up, was sixty-two feet long and thirty-two feet wide. We had prospecting equipment of all kinds and descriptions.

On the deck were sixteen canoes of various sizes. In the davits swung two motor whale-boats thirty-five feet long, one sturgeon-head motor scow thirty-five feet long, the schooner's own motor-boat and two dories.



Captain Randell dressed in his arctic regalia just before starting for his first expedition to Hudson Bay during the summer of 1927



Schooner *Morso*, Captain Randell commanding, leaving Halifax, Nova Scotia, for a mining exploration trip to Hudson Bay, July 9, 1928



Captain Randell helping to raft ashore an automobile equipped for snow traction at Mistake Bay, near the Arctic Circle, during the summer of 1928. Captain Randell at the wheel

In our hold and on deck we carried fourteen thousand gallons of airplane gasoline, besides lubricating oils. In the after beak we carried two tons of dynamite with the gasoline. That item alone made it one of the most dangerous cargoes any one could wish to handle.

More than half a million dollars was invested in that expedition. And not a word of it got out until the day we sailed.

We sailed out of Halifax, July 8, 1928. I was in command. Once more I got into the movies.

We made the voyage north without any accident. We stopped at Wakeham Bay in the Hudson Straits to pick up twenty-one Eskimos. They were to be used as help on the west side of Hudson Bay wherever we established our base.

They came aboard with everything they had—dogs, kyaks, tents, furs and cooking utensils. When we first saw them they were a small village on the shore. When we sailed, all they left behind was the bare rocks.

Before they had been aboard forty-eight hours, they began to go down with the influenza. I had a wholesale doctoring job on my hands in addition to commanding the ship. But I pulled them through with a combination of aspirin and whisky and castor oil.

We picked our base and marked out the sites for the quarters for the men. We selected a harbor for the

Morso and a harbor for the two seaplanes. We put up all our houses.

The two English seaplanes began their flights with the mining prospectors as passengers. A lot of mining claims were staked out. Meanwhile two more big seaplanes the Lindsley group had bought in New York flew up to us from there. We landed nearly all our cargo at this spot, which we called Base Number One.

Then I took the *Morso* farther along in search of a site for Base Number Two. We went to Fort Chesterfield, and then up Chesterfield Inlet and on into Baker Lake. It was a trip of about one hundred and eighty miles. Except for small motor craft, no vessel had ever been up there before.

It was fascinating work. We discharged the remainder of our supplies for Base Number Two at Baker Lake, and also discharged a hundred and fifty tons of cargo we had taken up there for the Hudson Bay Company and Revillion Freres. We returned without any kind of an incident. The jinx seemed to be off my shoulders at last, now I was through with the *Madeline D.*

The N. A. M. E. made a belated effort to get back what they had lost by talking too much and letting their plans become known. Instead of retrieving their loss, they lost their ship and the lives of two men.

I went back home to take the rest I had earned. Through the success of the Morso Expedition, my name appeared rather a lot in the newspapers throughout Canada. The Lindsley group had asked me to take the *Morso* back over the same trail north next summer. I had an idle winter on my hands.

Then the representative of some Montreal business men came to see me.

"We want you to take command of a schooner we are going to put into the liquor trade with the United States," he said.

"What schooner?" I asked.

"Her name is the *I'm Alone*," he said.

There were several considerations that made me look unfavorably on the proposal.

Rum running was beginning to pall. I had undergone some unfortunate experiences in it. I had risked my life. I had been cheated and swindled. I had been thrown in contact with some of the toughest and crookedest characters any man could meet. The adventure and the possible profits could not wholly outweigh what I had been through.

I explained all this to my visitor. He countered with another view of the situation.

Big business and its methods had entered rum running, he explained. The days were over when it paid

to drop anchor in Rum Row and peddle the liquor in small lots by "catch-as-catch-can" methods to whoever came out after it ready to pay cash over the rail. Procedure had become systematized.

The group he represented had that system worked out to the last detail, he said. The American purchaser of the liquor was known before the liquor was even loaded on the schooner at a British port. The transaction was all arranged before the vessel put out to sea. Even the price was settled in advance. The money for the liquor, even, was deposited in a bank "in escrow," to be turned over to the Canadian business men on telegraphic advice in code that delivery of the liquor had been made.

Under this system, the commander of the liquor ship was under orders to remain on the high seas, outside American territorial waters. He was under further orders that neither he nor his crew were to fraternize with anybody on board the American rum-running craft that came out to get their cargo.

The captain of the liquor ship did not even have to know the man who came out to get the liquor. Identification of the man who came for the liquor as the one authorized to receive it was simple and absolute.

Before the captain of the liquor ship sailed, he would be given a packet of one-dollar American bank-notes torn in half. Say that he was given fifteen of those half-

bank-notes, their serial numbers running consecutively. Say that the eighth of these fifteen bank-notes was the one selected for identification.

The liquor ship would go to a designated anchorage off the American coast and outside American territorial waters. Presently another craft would come alongside.

"Who are you?" the captain of the liquor ship would demand.

"My serial number is B49807697E," the captain of the visitor would reply, if he was the right man.

Those serial numbers are printed in the lower left-hand corner and the upper right-hand corner of every American one-dollar bank-note. No two bank-notes have the same number.

The captain of the liquor ship would bring out his packet of fifteen half-bank-notes. He would thumb them down to the eighth, and bring it out. The visitor would produce his half-bank-note. The bank-notes had all been torn in half with an irregular torn edge.

There was an identification that nobody in the world could forge. If the torn edges fitted, and the serial numbers were the same, there was your man. You let him have the liquor.

There were no complications at the Custom House of any British port, either, it was explained. Suppose the rum runner loaded a cargo of liquor at Belize, British Honduras. The craft would clear for Nassau in the

Bahamas, where under British law it was perfectly legal to take a liquor cargo. Sailing away with the liquor, the rum runner would come back presently to Belize with empty holds. All the captain of the rum runner had to do was to go to the Custom House at Belize, and present his ship's papers with the endorsement: "Cargo discharged on the high seas," and sign it as master of the ship—a perfectly legal procedure. No questions were ever asked. No British law was being violated.

"There's the system," my visitor told me. "We'll pay you five hundred dollars a month, and a bonus at the end of the job."

I thought for a while of a winter in tropical waters at good pay, as against a winter in Nova Scotia in enforced idleness. Here was a chance to come back to Nova Scotia in the spring with a fattened bank account, and in time to go north next summer with the *Morso*.

But I didn't like the idea of the *I'm Alone*. I knew a good bit about her. She was a beautiful model known as the knock-about type of Nova Scotia fisherman, a two-masted schooner one hundred and twenty-five feet six inches between perpendiculars, with a beam of twenty-six feet eleven inches and a molded depth of ten feet six inches. She was two hundred and five tons gross and ninety-one tons net, with a cargo-carrying capacity of two hundred and fifty tons. She did not carry a full spread of canvas. She was equipped with

jib, jumbo, foresail and storm trysail. But she was also equipped with two Fairbanks-Morse semi-Diesel oil-burning engines of one hundred brake horse-power each. In smooth water she steamed light, a little under eight knots. With those sails, in a strong wind on the beam, she could make about nine and a quarter knots on a spurt, but not more than nine on the average.

It was more of her history I was thinking about, however, than her build and equipment and speed. She had been owned by a group of Boston rum runners. When they broke up she had been sold to a Lunenburg ship-owner.

"She is a notorious vessel, and she is on the Black List of the United States prohibition authorities and the United States Coast Guard," I protested to my visitor.

"That is all perfectly true," he said. "We know that she was a notorious rum runner, and that she was owned by a man who is now serving time in a United States Federal Penitentiary. But she has changed hands twice since then. The United States Government knows she is not being operated by her former owners. We do not see on what grounds the United States can seize her if she keeps on the high seas."

I thought it all over. From a Canadian point of view the whole project was within the law. Canadian lawyers confirmed that as their opinion, too. In the end, after some deliberation, I took command of the *I'm Alone*.

CHAPTER XVIII

ELUDING THE COAST GUARD

I return to rum running with the *I'm Alone* under the ægis of big business—Chased by revenue cutters.

I SAILED out of Halifax with the *I'm Alone* on November 4, 1928, for St. Pierre, Miquelon. There we took on a full cargo of assorted liquors. I was given sealed orders and told to proceed to Havana, Cuba, and open them when off that port.

We made a wonderful run south. Off Morro Castle I opened my orders. They told me to proceed to a position on the twenty-eighth parallel of latitude north, and ninety-one west. That was off the coast of Louisiana. There I was to wait until a vessel came and spoke to me, giving me a certain pass-word. The captain of that vessel would give me a position nearer shore.

I waited around twenty-eight north and ninety-one west for a week. I saw nobody. I decided to run in and sight Trinity Shoal Light Buoy off the passes of the Mississippi River. I studied Trinity Shoal on the chart, went in and dropped anchor there.

I was not sure of my chronometer. By anchoring at a known spot on the chart, I could check my instruments.

We anchored there in the morning, intending to go out to our old position at twenty-eight north and ninety-one west, next night. But when we started to heave up the anchor that afternoon, we discovered that the hoisting engine was not working. While we were repairing it, the United States Coast Guard cutter *Walcott* came into sight, steaming up from the south. She came up to us and steamed around us several times. Then she dropped her anchor close by. She showed no signals, nor did she hail us by megaphone.

I ordered my crew to heave up the anchor by hand. The minute our anchor rose, the *Walcott's* anchor began to come up. We started to move. The cutter started toward us.

Since the cutter was trailing the *I'm Alone*, naturally I made up my mind I was not going to sail to the position where I was to meet the American rum runner's boat. I steamed away slowly to the southeast throughout that night. The *Walcott* hung on our heels all night. I continued on in that same direction all next day. The cutter continued to hang on our heels.

My general idea was to make the *Walcott's* commander think we were going south, and not let him

know our full speed. So we ran our engines only enough to make six knots. In those twenty-four hours we made about a hundred and fifty miles in a southeasterly direction from where we had met him. There was a little moon. I was waiting for it to go down, so I could try to shake the cutter off in the dark.

I noticed the skipper of the *Walcott* was using only one of his two engines. He would come up on our beam with a short spurt of speed. Then he would slow down for a while and drop astern. That was fine. It fitted exactly with what I wanted to do.

The moon sank. I waited until the *Walcott* got well back astern. Then I gave the command to douse all our lights and open up our engines to full speed ahead. At the same time I altered my course eight points, so that the *I'm Alone* would go at right angles to the course we had been steering when he was last on our beam.

As soon as we had made a little distance at right angles from our original course, I altered the course another eight points and steamed right back. The trick worked. I passed the cutter at a distance of about half a mile. Her skipper was completely confused.

In the dark we could see him zigzagging madly about at full speed, using his search-light in an effort to locate us. First he went off to starboard; then he went off to port. It never seemed to dawn on him to swing around

and investigate astern. So we kept astern of him, whichever way he went, until we lost sight of him altogether. Then we steamed away to the northeast for about sixty miles. After that we turned eastward again. Once out of his sight, I knew he would have a hard job to pick us up.

Next night we were back in our old position, about one hundred miles offshore, and south of the general steamer lane used by ships running between the Florida coast and the Texas coast.

I was all set to meet my man. I had fifteen halves of torn American dollar-bills. The right man would have the other half of the first of the fifteen.

But the other man didn't show up. I waited on our position forty-eight hours more. Then I decided to go down to Belize, British Honduras, get in touch with my owners by cable, and discover what was wrong. We reached Belize five days later.

"Have been on position ten days. Have not met vessel to take cargo. Please wire instructions," I cabled my owners.

Next day I got a cable instructing me to go to a position thirty-five miles south of Trinity Shoal Light Buoy. I checked it up on the chart. It would place me about sixty miles offshore, in a good position between the steamer lanes.

The second day I was in that position, a heavy, fast motor cruiser came tearing out from the land about six o'clock in the evening. She reached the *I'm Alone* just after dark.

"*I'm Alone*, ahoy," she hailed us.

"Who are you and what do you want?" I asked the man who had called over to me.

"My serial number is Y28242814D," he called back.

I looked up the serial number of the first of my fifteen halves of torn American dollar-bills, that had been given me by the agent of the Montreal business men at St. Pierre, Miquelon. That was the number.

"Come alongside," I called to the man.

He stepped aboard the *I'm Alone* a few minutes later.

"Show me your dollar-bill," I told him. He handed it to me. The ragged torn edges of the two bank-notes matched exactly.

"How much can you carry?" I asked the man.

"About twelve hundred cases," he said.

I knew him by reputation as one of the big bootleggers who made headquarters in New York. But I didn't chat with him, and I had given my crew orders to ask no questions and have no conversation with his crew. His men were a hard-looking lot. All of them were armed.

We loaded him that night and he steamed away in

the darkness toward the coast. His motor cruiser was a splendid, seaworthy craft with a cabin. She could have gone from New Orleans to Cuba or Belize herself—anywhere in the world in fact, as long as her gasoline supply lasted. *And*

Two nights later he came back again. This time the weather was so rough he could not take on a full load. He departed leaving two hundred cases of liquor aboard us. It wasn't worth while waiting for the weather to clear with just those few cases in our hold, so I returned to Belize.

I cabled my report to my owners and by return cable received further instructions. This time I was to load the *I'm Alone* at Belize and go back to our old stand south of Trinity Shoal Buoy and meet the New York bootlegger.

Several times we made that run back and forth from Belize. Every time we transferred the liquor successfully out at sea. The profits of the group of Montreal business men were piling up. In those half-dozen trips we never saw any sign of a United States Coast Guard cutter. Rough weather was the only thing that delayed the transshipment of our liquor cargo, and that very rarely. We had added a good many thousand cases of excellent liquor to the markets of the U. S. A.

Back in Belize I was told that the man who came out

to meet us from New Orleans or Galveston "had high financial and political connections." Under orders, however, I held no conversation with him. But I knew he had to have plenty of cash to do business with the group for which I was operating the *I'm Alone*. That cabin cruiser of his, loaded with twelve hundred cases of liquor, meant that he had put up some sixty thousand dollars in cash in escrow in the bank.

Everything seemed to be going beautifully. But there was one fly in the ointment. It was a thing that I couldn't get out of my mind, and it began to worry me. Several times when we had to wait at the designated position some thirty-five miles south of Trinity Shoal Light Buoy, about sixty miles offshore, I would beat away south to our old position in twenty-eight north and ninety-one west, to be less noticeable than when we were just hove to and waiting. And each time I ran across a small schooner. She appeared to be on the edge of the Banks, fishing. I did not wish to have any communication with her, so I always steamed away, on sighting her, in a southerly direction until we were out of sight. Then I would go twenty-five or thirty miles either east or west.

For I was beginning to have a hunch that the little schooner was not the innocent fishing craft she seemed. I figured out that she was posted there by the United

States Coast Guard as a lookout, and that concealed about her she had a wireless set that could report our position to the Coast Guard cutters.

She thoroughly looked the part of a dirty, bedraggled fishing schooner. But I had not forgotten the days in the World War when I had commanded a craft that looked like a dirty, bedraggled trawler. In that guise I had looked innocent and harmless, but I had been in constant wireless communication with the British Grand Fleet, and many a cargo meant for Germany had gone to the British Isles instead. That trick of loafing around in disguise on the high seas was too old.

Some of my crew thought she was out there like us, waiting to meet some shore-going motor cruiser and transship liquor cargo. I disagreed with them. Every time I sighted her I changed our course and got out of sight as fast as I could, lest a cutter suddenly appear at our heels.

Coming up from Belize with another cargo of liquor for the New York bootlegger, the *I'm Alone* reached that position on the edge of the Banks about ten o'clock one morning. The weather was dirty. Blowing strong from the northeast with driving rain. We were reaching along under jumbo, jib and storm trysail. About eleven o'clock that morning, we saw that dirty little fishing schooner ahead of us. By about noon she had

run down toward us and was passing along under our lee.

When I saw definitely that the skipper of the schooner was trying to get closer to us, I thought the less he knew about us, the better. Very obviously he was trying to get a look at our name. We had a long strip of canvas below with the name "Giant King" painted on it. The previous captains had used it to cover over the name. I told my men to tack it over the name on the port bow. The name on our stern was blackened by smoke from the engine exhaust.

The little schooner passed so close to us that I could see he had fish bait cut up on the deck.

"How's the fishing?" I called across.

I got no answer. I thought perhaps he hadn't understood me. I called the question again, and made motions with my hands as if pulling in fishing lines.

The master of the schooner didn't reply. But one old man at the wheel, standing behind the others, shook his head at me as much as to say: "We're not fishing."

I was thoroughly uneasy, now. I was absolutely convinced that the schooner was a lookout for the Coast Guard cutters.

I headed on to the westward, and by six o'clock that evening I was about twelve miles from the position where we had met the schooner.

Then, just before it got dark, I saw a Coast Guard cutter come racing toward us—and she was coming from the direction of that little schooner. Then I knew my suspicions were right. The lookout had lumbered along behind us that afternoon, calling the nearest Coast Guard cutter by radio and giving him our course.

The cutter came up close under our lee, and I saw it was the *Dexter*. I knew from reports current among the liquor dealers in Belize that the *Dexter* would stick closer than the *Walcott*. Her captain had the reputation of being “a lot harder-boiled.”

When under our lee he flashed his search-light on our name on the port bow. He saw *I'm Alone* without a doubt. We had been reported to him as the “Giant King.” He didn't hail us, just kept steaming around us, and as the night closed down his search-light began to play on us from time to time. There was nothing for me to do but wait for a favorable opportunity to get rid of him.

About midnight the wind came away from the north with a heavy squall. I altered course to southeast, using my canvas only. By daybreak the wind had freshened to a strong breeze. We were making about five knots without using our engines.

I knew now that the jig was up as far as any chance of meeting the New York bootlegger went, while the *Dexter*

continued hanging on our heels. We had to trick the cutter and shake her off, or else go all the way back to Belize. Very evidently he didn't intend to be shaken off.

We ran on all that day, heading for the Yucatan Channel. I noticed that while daylight lasted, the *Dexter* kept about a mile astern of us, but as soon as the darkness shut down on us again, her skipper raced up to within a few hundred yards of us and kept his searchlight on us all the time. It looked as if this was going to be a good game.

A little after midnight I had all my plans made. I put out all the lights on the *I'm Alone* except one stern light. Then I prepared the "stage properties" for the trick. We had a small buoy aboard. I had one of the crew lash a small pole to the buoy, and lash a lantern to the top of the pole. I lighted the lantern and then muffled it with a cloth.

Then, when the stern of the *I'm Alone* squattered down in the trough of the sea, I extinguished our stern light, took the cover off the lantern on the pole, and slipped the buoy overboard.

All of our lights out, we started our engines and ran away at full speed. We hadn't gone far when we noticed the *Dexter* coming up to the light. I altered our course about twelve points and headed away to the

westward so that I could bring the wind full on our opposite quarter.

The *Dexter* came up to the floating lantern, and put a search-light on it. The minute her skipper saw what it was, he steamed away to windward. Then suddenly he put all his lights out. I thought for a few minutes that we had got rid of him. But that Coast Guard skipper was a persistent beggar. The first thing I knew, he had altered his course and he ran right down toward us. Suddenly the shaft of his search-light shot out through the dark. For a moment it felt around on the empty sea like a big white finger—and then it settled squarely on us.

CHAPTER XIX

CHASE OF THE I'M ALONE

Beginning of the pursuit which ended in the sinking of my ship.

I KNEW it was useless to try to lose him again that night. Whether the skipper of the *Dexter* was having a run of luck, or whether he had outguessed me, he had his finger on us.

I jibed over and sailed away on our original course, just shutting off our engines and jogging along.

It was very evident that the captain of the *Dexter* was thoroughly mad, because all the remainder of that night he seldom took his search-light off us. And he kept up on our weather quarter in a position only about two hundred yards away, so that he could see our hull plainly, and could also see our side-lights. He seemed fully determined to follow us clear to Belize.

There was no let-up in his pursuit when morning dawned. All through the morning he stayed close astern of us. Now and then he would drop a little distance behind, but he always kept us in sight.

About noon that day I saw a clear, bright spot of sky

through the clouds ahead. I put the engines full speed ahead to try to reach it on the chance that I might get a shot at the sun.

The *Dexter* was then about a mile astern. Her skipper put on more speed to keep up with us. But I noticed that he came up very slowly. The reason was plain. There was almost a gale of wind on his quarter, and with his engines going full speed in that rough sea he yawed back and forth and could not get full power because his engines raced every time his propellers came out of the water. That gave us a slight advantage. For the *I'm Alone* could steer a straight course, and being a deep-draft vessel, we could get full power out of our engines.

All that afternoon the *Dexter* hung doggedly on our heels. I was doing some heavy thinking. If I could give the slip to a man like this, it would make the game really worth while. There was a genuine thrill in matching seamanship and deep-water strategy with him.

So that night, just as it got dark, I decided to make another try at running away from him. The weather was made to order for it. But just as I was ready to put my plan into execution, the blasted wind suddenly dropped and he came up on our quarter so quickly that I had to give up the idea for the time.

We plugged along with the *Dexter* at our heels until

midnight. By then it was pitch dark, and the sky was completely overcast with thick clouds. The skipper of the *Dexter* was pursuing the same tactics he had used the night before. He was dropping astern from time to time, and then speeding up and overhauling us, and sweeping us derisively with his search-light. He was having a fine game of the cat playing with the mouse. But the mouse had an idea or two in its head. I was ready, now, to take another try at tricking him.

I waited until he dropped astern as far as I thought he was going to go. Then I started our engines slowly, knowing that he would increase his revolutions a little to overtake us. As soon as I had given him time to do this, I rang for full speed ahead. When I thought we were as far ahead as we could get on that straight course without the *Dexter* starting to overhaul us, I ordered all our lights doused, all our canvas dropped—and with bare poles we steamed directly into the wind.

My guess had been that he would think we had gone to leeward to take advantage of the wind, as we had done the night before when we had slipped away and he had caught us again. I was right. By the time that he had zigzagged and played his search-light all over the sea to leeward, and had at last made up his mind that we had headed the other way, we had got far enough away to lose him.

As soon as I thought we were completely clear of him, I headed back for our designated position to meet the New York bootlegger. Four days later I had transshipped every last case of our liquor cargo to that gentleman's cabin cruiser, and the *I'm Alone* was on her way back to Belize. All my crew were chuckling at the way we had tricked the *Dexter*. They went ashore at Belize still chuckling about it, and they told their friends.

News travels fast in the world of the rum runners. Way down in Belize the story came to me that all up and down the coast of the Gulf of Mexico men had been laughing at the skipper of the *Dexter* about the way I had given him the slip in the *I'm Alone*. I learned that the *Dexter's* skipper was Captain Powell.

I was even told details of one conversation a man was said to have had with him.

"Smart as you think you are," I was told that man said to him, "that old skipper of the *I'm Alone* will outwit you every time."

And I was told Captain Powell's reply to that was:

"I'll make you a bet, any amount you want to name, that the next time I meet up with that old ——, I'll get him!"

Several of my friends in Belize warned me to "watch out." They told me this Captain Powell prided himself

equally on his seamanship and his reputation for being "hard-boiled."

We spent some little time at Belize, after that voyage, overhauling the *I'm Alone* and giving the crew a little rest and recreation ashore in British Honduras.

That was a fine crew. John Williams, a Newfoundlander, was my mate. Leon Maingoy, a Frenchman with a wife and three children at St. Pierre, Miquelon, was my boatswain. He had won the Croix de Guerre with the French Army in the World War. Chesley Hobbs, a Newfoundlander, was my chief engineer. Jens Jensen, a Dane, with a wife and two children in Halifax, was my assistant engineer. The four others were Edward Fouchard, of St. Pierre, Miquelon; James Barrett, of Montreal; Eddie Young, a Hindu, born at Belize; and William Wordsworth, the cook, a negro born at Belize.

Our overhaul completed and the crew rested, we took on another cargo for the New York bootlegger. There were twenty-five hundred cases of William Penn rye whisky that cost eight dollars a case in Belize; three hundred cases of Johnny Walker Black Label Scotch whisky costing eighteen dollars a case in Belize; one hundred ten-gallon demijohns of Carta d' Oro Bacardi rum, costing eight dollars a gallon at Belize; and two hundred cases of mixed champagnes and liqueurs that averaged twenty dollars a case in Belize.

That cargo cost the Montreal business men about sixty-two thousand four hundred dollars in Belize.

American drinkers will have to figure out what it would cost them ashore inside the territorial limits of the United States. Personally I have paid fifteen dollars for a quart of whisky in New York.

The *I'm Alone* herself, I should say, was worth around forty-five thousand dollars as she stood that day.

The investment of the Montreal business men stood a bit above one hundred thousand dollars when we finished loading that cargo.

Everything had gone so successfully that we had a little party aboard the *I'm Alone* in Belize harbor the day the loading was finished. We opened a few bottles and had a few drinks. Then I was rowed ashore for my last visit to the Custom House. I took with me my kodak with which I had snapped a few pictures of groups at the party on board, and snapped a couple of shots at the *I'm Alone* as she lay at anchor. I laid the kodak down in the Custom House, forgot it, and went back to the schooner without it.

My orders were to steam to the old position thirty-five miles south of Trinity Shoal Light Buoy, about sixty miles off the Louisiana coast. We had a fair wind all the way. I made the trip in two days less than the usual time.

All the way up I couldn't get that fishing-schooner lookout for the Coast Guard cutters off my mind. I knew that now she didn't need to see what name was painted on our stern to recognize us. She knew us as far as she could see us by the cut of our jib. And I knew, after that last experience, that the minute she sighted us she would wireless the Coast Guard.

So with this constantly on my mind, I slipped in and anchored on the edge of Trinity Shoals. We were two days ahead of time. I thought that anchorage would be a safe, out-of-the-way place where we could make some little repairs that we needed, without being seen. We had burned out a bottom-end bearing and scored our shaft badly, going home on the trip before. That hadn't been satisfactorily fixed in the overhaul at Belize. There were a few other little adjustments that would help.

Sighting Trinity Shoal Light Buoy, I ran five miles on a west-northwest course, and then true north another five miles, allowing two knots for the current setting to the northwest. In that short run from a designated and charted point, allowing for the maximum current and knowing the revolutions and speed of my engines, I knew that my position could not possibly be more than half a mile out, one way or the other.

It was five o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, March twentieth, when I dropped anchor.

"Go ahead with your repairs, and make a fast job of it," I told Hobbs, my chief engineer. "We don't want to get picked up by a cutter."

But just after daybreak I saw my old friend the Coast Guard cutter *Walcott* coming toward us at full speed from the westward.

"Heave up the anchor!" I ordered.

Five minutes later we were on our way. The *Walcott* was some six miles away and making about eleven knots. With my engines in the shape they were, some seven knots was the best I could do.

I steered south by west. As we went south, I noticed that the *Walcott* kept altering her course, swinging in a great curve to cut us off.

Just after we had started I had noticed an oil tanker steering about west-northwest. The tanker had crossed our head. Before the *Walcott* got within three miles of us, her captain seemed to change his mind. He swung over and raced after the oil tanker.

My first thought was that he had a suspicion that the tanker, being near us at daybreak, had taken on our liquor cargo in the night. I have heard from various sources since, however, that Captain Paul of the *Walcott* was checking his position by the tanker's captain.

We kept on going south. After some three-quarters of an hour we lost sight of the cutter. I thought we

might have shaken off the *Walcott*. But suddenly there she was again, chasing back after us.

Captain Paul came up astern, blowing his whistle as a signal for us to heave to. I sailed on my way, taking no notice. Then he came up on our quarter and broke out the international two-flag hoist which has the double meaning "Heave to," or "Head offshore."

I put my own interpretation on that signal. I kept right on heading offshore.

Then he came closer, within hailing distance by megaphone.

"Heave to!" he shouted at me.

"I will not heave to!" I megaphoned back at him. "I'm on the high seas and you have no jurisdiction over me."

"I'll have to open fire on you if you don't heave to," was his ultimatum.

"Shoot if you want," was mine.

He seemed nonplussed for the moment. He steamed along astern of us, breaking out no more signals for a while. Then he speeded up and came close to our quarter again.

"Captain, I'd like to come aboard you for a talk," he called through his megaphone.

I looked across the water at the cutter. Her gun-crew had swung her naval quick-firer around until it was aimed straight at us. That didn't look so good.

"Captain, you may come aboard, but only with one man and unarmed," I told him.

"Very well. I will do that," he said.

I signaled my engines to stop. The *Walcott* came up on our beam and stopped abreast of us.

Then as one of the cutter's men started to lower away a dory, I saw two things. The *Walcott's* gun-crew closed in on the naval quick-firer that was pointed directly at us, and slammed a shell into the breach. One man even stood with his hand on the lanyard. Others of the Coast Guardsmen grouped themselves behind Captain Paul, and all of them were wearing pistols.

I rang full speed ahead. The *I'm Alone* started to move. I picked up my megaphone and called across to Captain Paul.

"You can come aboard me only if you follow my instructions to come with one man, and both of you unarmed," I shouted. "Also you've got to keep your gun-crew away from that gun."

He shouted orders to his crew. The gun-crew fell away from the breech of the gun. The men with side arms dropped back from the rail.

With one man, both of them unarmed, Captain Paul was rowed across in his dory. He was wearing slippers.

He climbed over my rail, shook hands with me, and I invited him below.

"Why did you refuse to let me come on board?" was the first question he asked.

"Because you had no jurisdiction over me," I told him. "I was fourteen miles offshore when you first saw me. Also I knew that if I had allowed you to come on board with an armed guard, you would have seized the schooner and taken her in. Isn't that so?"

"Yes, Captain," he said. "Those were my orders—to bring you in."

"Do you realize," I asked him, "that the United States Coast Guard, officers and men, have been perjuring themselves lately by swearing that all vessels they have brought in were inside territorial waters, even if they were taken a hundred miles offshore?"

"I do not think that is true, Captain," he said.

"Maybe you don't," I said, "but it is a well-known fact, and that is just exactly what would happen to me if I allowed you to take me in."

He said nothing.

"Why should I allow my owners to be put to the expense, the time and the trouble of trying to get the vessel clear after she was seized?" I went on. "You know as well as I do that not one rum runner has ever been taken into the United States without costing the owners the value of the ship and cargo before they were released. Besides, it's another well-known fact that

every captain of a rum ship taken into the United States by the Coast Guard has lost all his personal belongings, and there are mighty few cases in which such a captain has ever been reimbursed."

"I do not think that is true, either, Captain," he said.

"I know it is true," I told him. "I've talked to the captains who have been looted. Look here——"

I led him into my room and showed him my effects.

"You can see for yourself I have all my personal belongings here," I pointed out. "Sextants, chronometers, typewriter, uniforms—practically everything I own is on board."

Then I asked him:

"Besides, Captain, just why do you wish to take in the *I'm Alone*?"

"Because you are inside the treaty limits," he said.

CHAPTER XX

"NO JURISDICTION"

The matter of treaty limits—Tagged by the *Walcott*—The *Dexter* appears.

I LOOKED at Captain Paul in astonishment.

"Inside the treaty limits!" I said. "How did you determine your position?"

This was a matter of navigation now. And if I am nothing else in the world, I am a navigator.

"I left the Trinity Shoal Light Buoy last night at nine o'clock," he said, "and I have been waiting, drifting around, until I sighted you just after daybreak. I kept taking soundings. I knew my position within a quarter of a mile."

"I fail to see how you can possibly know it," I told him, "with a two-knot current running, and the soundings practically the same for thirty miles to the west, and you drifting all night by your own admission. Have you seen the land? Have you determined your position by star-sights since you left the light buoy last night?"

"No," he said. "I haven't any instruments to take star-sights."

"Look here," I told him. I showed him my sextant with its star-sight equipment. It cost me one hundred and fifty pounds sterling in London.

"It's a beauty," he said. "I never saw one like that before."

Then I showed him my position on the chart, and the distance I had run from the light buoy as shown by my engineer's report.

"I agree with you that you are not very far off your calculations," he said. "But I figure that you are about thirteen and a half miles offshore."

"In that case, Captain," I said, "on what grounds do you consider I am within the treaty limits?"

"You know your ship can make fourteen knots, Captain Randell," was his reply.

"My ship can not make fourteen knots any more than yours can make forty," I told him. "Even with a gale of wind and fairly smooth water and engines in good shape opened out full, our best speed is not more than nine and a half knots. The *I'm Alone* never averaged more than nine knots for twelve consecutive hours. See here——"

I showed him a copy of the rum-running treaty between Great Britain and the United States.

"Have you a copy of this aboard?" I asked him.

"No," he said, "but I have this."

He showed me his book of the United States Coast Guard regulations, which gave him the right to search and seize certain vessels under certain conditions.

"That book is nothing to me," I told him. "It was printed for your information, and its laws are for your own nationals. That treaty between your country and mine is all that affects me."

He sat down and read the treaty.

"Look there," he said, pointing to a passage. "That gives me the right to seize you."

"Look there," I told him, pointing to a passage farther down that reads: "The rights conferred by this article shall not be exercised at a greater distance from the shore, etc."

"That puts the *I'm Alone* outside your jurisdiction," I told him.

He sat silent for a moment, as if thinking.

"Captain, you made a great mistake this morning," he said at last.

"What was it?" I asked.

"You threatened to shoot me if I came aboard you," he said.

"I didn't say that, and I had no intention of saying it," I told him. "Nothing was further from my thoughts."

"If you did say it, it would go very hard with you if I took you in," he said.

"Well," I replied, "I said nothing like those words, and I swear to you by all that I hold sacred that there was no intention of saying them. I never had even any such thought. Do you not believe me?"

"Yes," he replied, "I think it was a mistake."

"When you told me you would fire at me if I did not stop, the words I used were: 'Shoot if you want, but I will not allow you to come on board,' " I said.

"I believe you," said he, and we shook hands.

"As a matter of fact," I added, "the only weapons I have on board are an old rifle and an old Colt six-shooter I carried in the Boer War and keep as a souvenir."

I may have been foolhardy in my time, but I never would have opened fire with that armament on an armed government cutter.

Captain Paul rose to depart.

"Will you have a drink with me?" I asked him.

"No, thanks," he said, smiling. "I never touch it."

"Won't you take a few bottles back for your crew?" I invited.

"No, thanks," he said again. "I'd like to, but it is against regulations."

He had been on board the *I'm Alone* about an hour and three-quarters when he went back to the *Walcott*. We resumed our way south, the cutter still trailing us astern.

About two o'clock that afternoon, after having fallen back some distance astern, he came racing up again. I was watching him through my binoculars.

A signal went up to his peak.

"Stop or I fire at you."

I ordered my signal man to hoist the international negative.

The *Walcott* came closer, within megaphone distance.

"Captain," called Captain Paul, "I have orders to take you in. I will give you fifteen minutes to make up your mind. If you do not stop, I will be obliged to fire at you."

"I have no intention of stopping. You need not waste the fifteen minutes," I megaphoned back.

We sailed ahead about twenty minutes. Then I heard the first shot from the *Walcott*. I looked for the splash. There was none. I knew he was firing blanks. He fired another blank.

I stood on the after deck of the *I'm Alone* watching the *Walcott's* gun-crew through my binoculars. I didn't really need the glasses. The cutter wasn't two hundred yards away. After those two blank shots, I saw the gun-crew load with shell.

The first shell tore a hole through a sail. It would have been almost impossible to miss our hull at that

range, so I knew they were firing high. They fired about twenty shots, putting a few more holes through our sails and cutting away a backstay.

I stayed there on the after-deck, with my glasses trained on the cutter's gun-crew. Then I saw their gunner pull the lanyard and there was no report. The gun had jammed. I saw the gunner wrench the breech-block open without waiting the customary time that the British Grand Fleet regulations prescribe in such a case.

"Watch that damned fool get his head blown off," I told John Williams, my mate.

But luck was with that gunner. The gun didn't back-fire. All he got out of it was a broken arm when the breech-block swung back.

That was the last shot from the *Walcott's* naval quick-firer. But I could see that Captain Paul was shouting some orders. Then I saw one of his men running aft with a Thompson machine-gun.

The man threw himself down on the deck behind the bulwark, poked the muzzle of his gun through one of the openings where the mooring-hawsers are run out, and opened fire. Bullets began to sing around us.

Suddenly I felt a sharp blow in the front of my right thigh. The whole leg went numb. I staggered, but I caught my balance. I looked down expecting to see the

blood running, and wondering why the leg held up under me, for the hit was directly over the thigh bone and should have shattered it.

Then I saw something that had fallen to the deck, at my feet. It was one of those hard wax bullets the police use to break up a riot when they don't want to kill. I was thankful it wasn't steel-jacketed lead, which is what those Thompson machine-guns usually shoot.

After a few bursts of those wax bullets, the *Walcott* ceased firing and dropped astern. We plugged along south.

At sunset, as is customary, we hauled down the British flag we were flying. Then I noticed there was a shell hole in it. I was mad. If I had had a three-pounder aboard, that cutter would have gone to the bottom quick.

I semaphored Captain Paul: "Captain, you have made a grave error. You have mutilated my flag."

He signaled something back, but I paid no attention to it. I was through communicating with him.

All that night of March twentieth and all the day and night of March twenty-first I continued on my course south by east, steering for a point about twenty miles east of the Alacran Reef off the coast of Mexico.

By the evening of March twenty-first almost a moderate gale was blowing. We couldn't make a leg on

either tack, so we took in all sails and steamed along under bare poles, making about four knots an hour.

By daybreak, March twenty-second, the wind had increased to a moderate gale. A heavy sea was running. We were about two hundred and ten miles south of the American coast.

It was Friday morning!

The *Walcott* had hung on doggedly, steaming astern of us. About half past seven that morning I sighted another cutter steaming up from the west. Presently she came close enough so I could pick out her name with the binoculars.

She was the *Dexter*. And my old friend, Captain Powell!

Had I dreamed there was any likelihood that he would come up, I would have kept the canvas on the *I'm Alone* throughout that gale, and would have reached the coast of Cuba on an easterly course.

The *Dexter* surged up to the *Walcott* and they had a long confab. Later, some members of the cutters' crews told me what had happened at the session.

"My advice is not to fire at the schooner," they said Captain Paul of the *Walcott* had said. "This weather is too rough. I'd wait until the wind moderates."

They told me Captain Powell of the *Dexter* answered Captain Paul shortly:

"To hell with them! I came to get them and I'm going to get them!"

John Williams, my mate, and Chesley Hobbs, my engineer, also told me later that Captain Paul of the *Walcott* had himself repeated that conversation to them.

But whatever the conversation between the *Walcott* and the *Dexter*, Captain Powell on the bridge of the *Dexter* came tearing up on our starboard quarter at eight o'clock that morning. He was flying a string of signals:

"HEAVE TO OR I FIRE AT YOU."

Standing on the aft deck of the *I'm Alone*, I replied by semaphore:

"YOU HAVE NO JURISDICTION OVER ME AND I REFUSE TO STOP."

And then the fun began!

CHAPTER XXI

SCUTTLED

I am shelled by the Coast Guard and the *I'm Alone* is sunk.

THE *Dexter* went into action like a miniature battleship. Captain Powell was giving the *I'm Alone* all he had. These were not blanks or wax bullets, either.

Four-pounder explosive shells, machine-gun bullets, rifle bullets, came whistling at us pointblank at a range of less than two hundred yards.

The minute he opened fire, we hoisted the British flag. The *Dexter* turned a machine-gun on it and tried to shoot it down.

Our rigging was cut to bits. They made sieves of our sails. Shell after shell ripped and tore through the upper works of the *I'm Alone*, smashing our booms, our boats and our bulwarks.

William Wordsworth, the negro cook, dived below and stretched out on his stomach. All the rest of us were standing in a group on the aft-deck. The *Dexter's* riflemen and machine-gunners poured a stream of bullets into the deck-house just forward of where we were

standing. They were not shooting to pick us off. If they had been, they could not have missed us at that range.

About thirty shells had hit us, none of them at the water-line or below it, when an order was shouted aboard the *Dexter* and suddenly the firing ceased.

Megaphone in hand, Captain Powell called across to me from his bridge:

"NOW WILL YOU STOP?"

I shouted back at him:

"NO, DAMN YOU! YOU MAY SINK ME IF YOU LIKE, BUT I WILL NOT SURRENDER!"

Captain Powell called some orders to his men.

This time they fired for the water-line.

Shell after shell smashed squarely into the hull of the *I'm Alone*. Several shots struck us at the water-line. The sea began to pour in.

My cook was still down forward.

"I wish to go forward and call up my cook," I shouted across to the *Dexter* and started toward the bow. From the cutter they waved me back. Bullets began whistling around my head and striking the deck all around my feet. Then one of my men ran forward and got the cook aft.

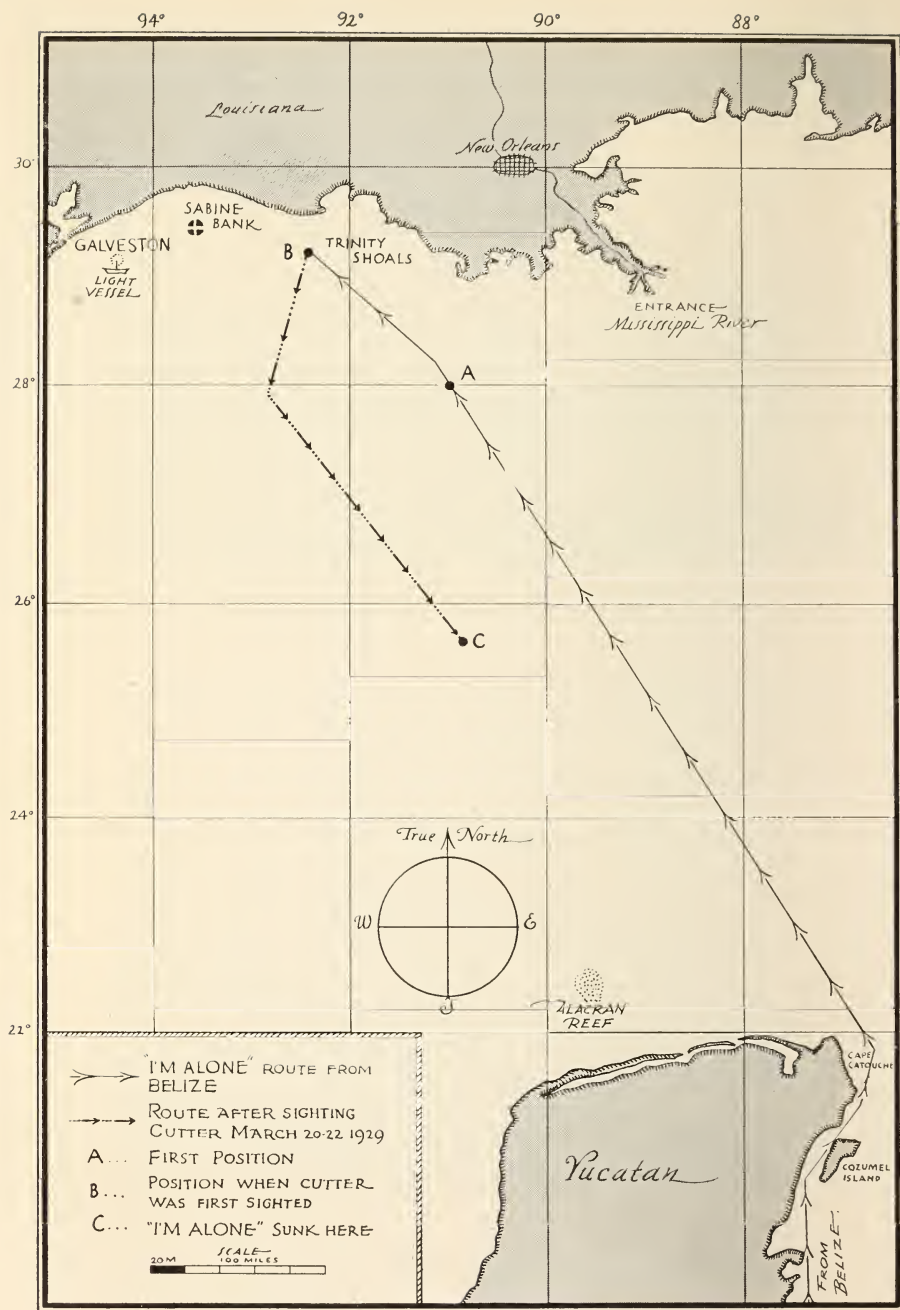
Just then I discovered a target on which some of the *Dexter's* men were concentrating. We had a gasoline



Rum-running schooner *I'm Alone* receiving her first suit of sails



I'm Alone on her trial run in Nova Scotia



drum, full, lashed by the main rigging on the port side. They must have fired twenty shells and hundreds of machine-gun and rifle bullets at that gasoline drum. Luckily for us the mainmast was between them and the drum and just a bit of the drum showed on each side of the mast. They missed it. If they had hit it and exploded it, it would have sent us all sky-high. If they had hit it, and it had only caught fire instead of exploding, the *I'm Alone* and the water all around her would have been a sea of flames. None of us would have come back to tell the story.

Some of my men told me afterward that men on the *Dexter* had told them they were trying their best to "ring the bell" on that drum, and making bets who would hit it, but perhaps they didn't know what was in it.

Shell after shell continued to rip into our hull. The hatches burst open. Shattered glass from the liquor cargo flew about.

All of us on the *I'm Alone* were standing aft by the wheel, now. In front of our eyes our schooner was being shot into a mass of wreckage and splinters. We wallowed there, helpless targets.

I saw the end was coming. I turned to my crew.

"Are you willing to stand by me and take it? Or are you afraid?" I asked them.

"Afraid! Hell, no!" came one answer.

"Let the —— —— sink her and be damned to them!" came another.

Leon Maingoy, my boatswain, spoke up.

"Skipper, don't stop 'em. Let them sink her if they want, but don't you stop 'em."

John Williams, my mate, chimed in.

"Skipper, we only die once! As long as we go down with that old flag flying, we've died for something!"

I looked over at the *Dexter*. On his bridge, Captain Powell was shouting something at his gunner. From the way the shells were smashing into us, it was evident that the gunner wasn't aiming at our water-line any longer.

The last eight or ten shells, however, tore into the hull of the *I'm Alone* along the water-line as if they were sewing a seam.

That finished the job. There wasn't any mistake about it now. The *I'm Alone* was sinking.

"Water over the engine-room floor, sir," reported Chesley Hobbs, my engineer.

"Stop the engines," I told him. They had been running all through the shooting.

The schooner fell off into the trough of the sea as she lost headway. She started settling by the head.

"Throw overboard everything that's loose," I ordered John Williams, my mate. "Throw over those pieces of

the broken boats, especially. They'll help keep the men afloat."

We all swung in on that job. Over the stern we pushed every fragment of broken wreckage we could grab. The wreckage began tossing about in the high sea. It was weather when you'd hesitate to lower a boat, let alone jump overboard and trust that you could cling to the fragment of one. But it was no time to hesitate any longer.

"Jump overboard. Hang on to those broken dories," I told my men. "Just hang on and float. Don't try to get inside them."

Even then I could hardly realize that she would sink so quickly. But as she settled down in the water from those last eight or ten shots fired, the sea poured in through the holes higher up in her hull. I saw we had only a few more minutes.

"Overboard! Every man of you!" I shouted at them as my men still hesitated to jump. "Get as far away from her stern as you can, so you won't be drawn down by the suction when she goes under!"

One by one they jumped and paddled toward bits of wreckage. Eddie Young, the Hindu sailor, clung to the deck. He wouldn't obey the orders to jump that I shouted at him. I had to run over to him, tear his hand-grip loose, pick him up and throw him overboard.

There I stood on the aft-deck, the last human being on the *I'm Alone*.

Her forward deck was under water, now.

Then she began her last dive.

The lines of her bow were such that when she started that dive, she planed ahead. As she slid forward and downward, her stern rose some ten feet in the air. Aft from her submerged forward deck raced a wave that roared waist-deep over the splintered wreckage of the deck-house.

I kicked off my shoes and jumped.

When I came up, the *I'm Alone* was gone.

She went down with the British flag flying.

As I rose on the crest of a wave, I looked around. All there was in sight was the two cutters, and the men of my crew all around me, swimming or clinging to pieces of wreckage. The heavy seas were tossing us about like corks. I swam to leeward toward the *Dexter*. Those waves were giving me a battle.

Half-way to her, I felt my strength going. The wind whipped the salt water in my face, filling my eyes and nose and mouth until I was blinded and strangling. High waves washed clean over me. I began to gasp. I expected every stroke to be my last.

Just as I was beginning to swallow sea water to the danger point, the two cabin doors from the *I'm Alone*

planed up from far below and came to the surface just a few feet in front of me. I paddled feebly over to them, and held on.

I felt myself beginning to slip. Things went hazy.

I was down to my last gasp. The *Dexter* was fully twenty feet away. My strength was so far gone that I never could have made it. But a sea swept alongside me one of my own men swimming on a heavy plank that bore him up safely. He grabbed me and helped me along. I tried to lift my arms and do my share. But it was like lifting a load of lead. Then, somehow, there the two of us were at the cutter's side.

"Heave us a line!" I tried to shout. I could hardly hear my own voice.

The sea was so heavy that the *Dexter* was rolling, decking the water and showing her bilge keel almost every roll. Four of us now were in the water beside her, barely keeping afloat. One man of the cutter's crew was on deck on that side of the craft. He threw us a piece of signal halyard. All four of us were nearly finished by the time he got us on board.

I don't know yet how I made that deck. But there I was, suddenly, stretched out on the planks, weak as a baby. I lurched feebly up to my feet and tried to steady myself against the pitch and roll. I was barefooted, in khaki shirt and khaki pants.

One of the *Dexter's* crew, belted with a pistol, came across the deck toward me.

"Have you got any arms or ammunition on you?" he demanded—and began feeling me all over for concealed weapons!

I managed to get back enough breath to say: "You must be crazy to think I'd try to swim a sea like that with a revolver and ammunition!"

He didn't seem to like it. But he finished searching me and walked off.

The *Walcott* was wallowing near by. They were having a lot of trouble getting some of my men aboard her. I saw Leon Maingoy, my boatswain, slip back into the water when they had him almost aboard.

And here I saw a brave deed. Charles H. Raeburn, a Coast Guardsman on the *Dexter*, kicked off his shoes and dived into that heavy sea after Maingoy. He missed him, came to the surface, dived again, missed and came up, and then dived the third time. This time, swimming deep down, he got him. Maingoy was dragged aboard the *Walcott*, limp. Meanwhile the *Dexter* had launched a dory and picked up one of my men who was hanging to a piece of a broken boat.

After we had been on board the *Dexter* a while, they gave us some odds and ends of dry clothing, and some hot coffee.

CHAPTER XXII

ON BOARD THE DEXTER

The crew is sympathetic—Delay—In New Orleans.

I WALKED up to Captain Powell.

"Will you send a message to the *Walcott* and ask if all my men on her are safe and well?" I asked him.

"Certainly," he said. He did it.

"One man unconscious. We are trying to revive him," came back the answer.

A little later two men went over from the *Dexter* to the *Walcott* to help revive this man. When they returned, Captain Powell told me the man was Leon Maingoy, the boatswain of the *I'm Alone*, and that he was conscious now, but very sick.

"Please make all possible speed back to port so he can get medical attention at the earliest possible moment," I requested.

"Certainly," said Captain Powell again. He ordered full speed ahead, and the two cutters started for the mouth of the Mississippi River.

During the run to the Mississippi River bar off South Pass I asked several times whether Maingoy was getting better or not. Each time I was told his condition was the same, and that he was still living.

Captain Powell was consistently brusque in his manner toward me. The crew of the *Dexter*, with the exception of two, were cordial, and acted as though they sympathized with me.

"Tough luck, Captain," several of them said out of the corners of their mouths as they passed me. Very evidently they didn't want their officers to see them speak to me. Once or twice the *Dexter's* mess-boy watched his opportunity and slipped in when nobody was near me, to hand me a bite of anything he had.

One of the Coast Guardsmen came into my room with a set of leg-irons in his hands.

"My orders are to put you in irons," he said.

"Am I a prisoner of war?" I asked.

"Never mind about that," he said. "It's orders."

"Whose orders?" I asked.

"Captain Powell's," he said.

He clamped the leg-irons around my bare ankles. I thought I might as well try to be philosophical about it, so I stretched out on the transom and tried to take a nap. It doesn't take leg-irons long to start hurting bare ankles.

Then one of the *Dexter's* men slipped down into my room.

"I just heard that the Old Man had you put in irons," he said. "I noticed you were barefoot. Here—wad these between the irons and your ankles, Captain."

He handed me a pair of socks.

"Don't let the Old Man know I slipped these to you," he requested as he left.

Twenty-four hours after they had picked us up out of the water, the two cutters were moored at the United States Army Engineers' wharf at the head of the Passes of the Mississippi River.

Down below, I could tell that the *Dexter* was being tied up at the wharf. I could take about six-inch steps, even with those leg-irons locked around my ankles. I climbed up the companionway and reached the deck.

"Get down below again," a Coast Guardsman ordered. He was a mean-looking beggar, in strong contrast with the other men of the *Dexter's* crew.

I went below again, and stretched out on that transom once more.

Captain Powell came below for something, while I was lying there in irons.

"How is Maingoy? What are we waiting for?" I asked him.

"I don't know how he is," he said, "but I'll find out."

Then Captain Paul of the *Walcott* came aboard the Dexter and started asking me questions.

"You tell me how that sick man of mine is getting along, before I have a word to say to you about anything else," I told him.

"He's getting along as well as can be expected, but he's still very sick," said Captain Paul.

"Then why are we tied up here?" I demanded.

"I wirelessly last night for a fast boat to meet us here and take your sick man to a New Orleans hospital," said Captain Paul. "But I told them we wouldn't reach this wharf until eleven o'clock this morning, and we are here two hours ahead of time. If the speed boat doesn't arrive by ten we'll start up the river ourselves."

"Captain Paul," I said, "I think it is strange that you should remain here instead of going on into town to give that man medical attention at the earliest possible moment."

He didn't answer me. He went up on deck without asking me any more questions.

A little after ten o'clock that morning, we cast off and steamed up the river. I hobbled up on deck with my leg-irons. This time nobody stopped me.

I was leaning against the rail, just out of sight of Captain Powell, when one of the Coast Guardsmen slipped up beside me, smoking a cigarette.

"They tell me the Old Man won't even give you a pack of cigarettes," he said, very low, out of the corner of his mouth. "Here, take a drag."

He handed me a quarter-smoked cigarette. I dragged.

Then some heavy signaling started between the *Dexter* and the *Walcott*. I could read it as plain as print.

"There's hell to pay ashore about this business," the *Walcott's* signal man was sending. "Tip your crowd to keep their mouths shut about the position of the *I'm Alone*."

"Let them try to get it," the *Dexter's* signal man sent back to the *Walcott*.

Then a fog shut down on the river and slowed us up.

It was eight o'clock Sunday morning, the next day, when we drew up alongside a New Orleans wharf. My leg-irons were unlocked and taken off. Taxicabs were waiting for us on the wharf, and under an armed guard we were taken to the United States Custom House. The guards let us in by the back door, taking extraordinary precautions to keep the public from noticing us, and keeping all newspaper reporters away from us, though a group of them were there and trying to reach us.

We were conducted to a large room that was part of a big suite of offices up-stairs. None of us were allowed to speak to one another.

A man who said he was Mr. Creighton, the Super-

visor of Customs, introduced me to Captain Gamble, Base Commander of the United States Coast Guard for the Gulf of Mexico, and then started asking me questions about my crew.

I turned to Captain Gamble.

"Did you order the *Dexter* to sink my ship?" I demanded.

"No," he said.

"Did you receive orders from Washington to sink my ship?" was my next question to Captain Gamble.

"Not directly," he replied.

I turned to that group of American officials.

"Gentlemen," I said, "I wish to inform you that the sinking of my ship was a cowardly act, and that my crew and I were taken half-drowned out of the water more than two hundred miles from the coast of the United States of America. Under those circumstances I claim that you have no jurisdiction over me or my men. We are shipwrecked mariners. As such I demand that I be allowed to get in touch with my consul and my owners, and immediately."

"I do not think the British Consul would wish to have anything to do with you," said Mr. Creighton. "Anyway, there is very little likelihood that you can get in touch with him to-day. It is Sunday."

"My consul certainly knows of the sinking of the

I'm Alone, since the newspaper reporters know about it," I said, "and I am sure he will wish to see me and my men at the earliest opportunity."

"I can assure you that I will try to get in touch with the British Consulate," said Mr. Creighton. "And I wish to assure you also that any questions you answer will in no way affect your position."

All that day they held us as prisoners in the Custom House. None of us were allowed to speak to any of our shipmates. All were questioned and cross-examined.

One of my men, though he could read English quite well, spoke no English. He was questioned through an interpreter. Presently they presented him with a statement written in English, demanding that he sign it as his statement. He read it. He found in it several questions that had never been put to him, and answers that would have incriminated him and the whole ship's company had he made them—which he hadn't. He pointed at the questions and answers and said: "I din say dat. I din say dat." He made them delete those fake questions and answers before he would sign the statement.

In the meantime I had consented to make a statement to the American authorities and to sign it.

It was four o'clock that Sunday afternoon when, after signing my statement, I was led into another room in the Custom House.

There I was presented to Mr. Simpson, who is his Britannic Majesty's senior Vice-Consul representing Mr. Henry Tom, Consul-General for the southern states of the United States of America, with headquarters at New Orleans.

Next evening, when I met Consul-General Tom he expressed surprise when he learned from me of my vain efforts to reach him.

"I had been waiting since Saturday for news of you," he said. "I had called up the United States Customs authorities repeatedly, asking if you had arrived. Mr. Creighton promised me I would be informed the moment the United States Coast Guard cutters reached the wharf."

Had I known that, I would have seen them in hell before I made or signed any statement.

Then my captors handed me two surprises.

The first was the news that Leon Maingoy, my boatswain, was dead when they took him out of the water.

The second was the news that I was under arrest, charged with conspiring to violate the laws of the United States.

"I ought to prosecute you for not having life-belts aboard the *I'm Alone*," Mr. Creighton told me. "If you'd had them as the law requires, Maingoy wouldn't have been drowned."

I let that pass without comment!

Then Mr. Edwin Grace, New Orleans Admiralty lawyer and my attorney, arrived and told me I should not have made any statement until I had been permitted to see my consul and my lawyer. Also he brought the cheery news that it was now half past four o'clock Sunday afternoon—and too late to obtain bail.

So with my men I went to jail in New Orleans. We were photographed by newspaper cameramen. Creighton, who, I understand, was guided in all his actions by the Federal Assistant Attorney General from Washington, tried his damndest to keep camera and newspaper men away.

"Come on, Captain Randell," they begged. "Be a sport and give us a picture of you looking through the bars."

Well, why not? We were behind the bars. We were photographed looking through them.

That photograph was sent across the Atlantic Ocean by radio and published in England.

The officials at the Orleans Parish Prison gave us the best food and accommodations they had, however, and were extraordinarily decent.

When I awoke Monday morning a policeman stopped in front of my cell door to pass the time of day with me.

"Did you sleep well, Captain?" he asked.

"Fine," I told him. "A lot better than I would have slept at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico."

"You're damned well right," he grinned. "Did you have everything you wanted last night?"

"Everything but a good whisky and soda," I told him. "And I certainly could have done with a few of those."

It was Tuesday before we could get our hearing before the United States Commissioner. He let us out on bail.

In the meantime money had been telegraphed me. I took my crew to a New Orleans shop and we bought new outfits. We were in the bedraggled garments in which we had jumped overboard from the sinking *I'm Alone*.

Then I led them into a hotel and we wallowed in the baths we needed.

In the United States Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana at New Orleans, the United States District Attorney, after asking and obtaining several continuances, dropped the case against us.

Every man of the *I'm Alone* went free.

I returned for a visit to my home in Nova Scotia.

What will come next? Who knows? It will be some adventure or other.

Those men are liars who tell you the days of adventure are dead. What they really mean is that *they* are dead, though the undertaker hasn't found it out yet.

Adventure is a living thing, so long as there are men and women, sea and land, and ships to sail that sea on this planet.

THE END

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